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### COMMUNISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

Post-Stalin Developments in the Satellites

CIA/SRS-7  
PART II/B



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COMMUNISM IN EASTERN EUROPE:  
Post-Stalin Developments in the Satellites

CIA/SRS-7

PART II/B

HUNGARY

This is a speculative study which has been discussed with US Government intelligence officers but has not been formally coordinated. It is based on information available to SRS as of 20 March 1958.

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FOREWORD

The following report on Hungary is the third in a series of studies being produced by the Senior Research Staff under the general title of Communism in Eastern Europe: Post-Stalin Developments in the Satellites. The two previous studies, labelled Part I and Part II/A (published together as CIA/SRS-7, CONFIDENTIAL), dealt respectively with general trends in the Satellites and with Poland. Developments in the other Satellites will be considered in future reports, and the series will be concluded by an appraisal of conditions and prospective trends in Eastern Europe as a whole.

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PART II/B

HUNGARY

1. When they were written at the turn of the year 1955, Imre Nagy's forecasts of "national disaster" invited by the "catastrophic mistakes" of Rakosi received little more attention in Moscow and Budapest than the dire predictions often heard from political opponents in democratic capitals.<sup>1</sup> Events in Hungary were, however, soon to prove that Nagy had by no means exaggerated.

The Debacle of the Rakosi Regime

2. The Hungarian standard of living had remained exceedingly low as a consequence of the forced rate of industrialization and collectivization during Rakosi's first period of power. Then followed almost two years of chaotic conditions resulting from the conflicting policies of Rakosi and Nagy during their practice of "collective leadership." It is hard to find any reasonable explanation for the toleration by Moscow of that absurd situation unless one assumes that each of the protagonists had powerful backers in the Kremlin. There appears to be more than a coincidence in the fact that the basic policies advocated by Nagy during his tenure as premier (July 1953 to February 1955) were very similar to those attributed to Malenkov in the USSR. Whatever the explanation, the economic condition of the country was undoubtedly bad. This condition was shown when the 1956 budget was reduced 7.6% below that of the preceding year - the first time such a thing had happened. The political situation was no better. The Hungarian Communist Party was deeply split between a Stalinist wing headed by Rakosi and Nagy's

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<sup>1</sup>Imre Nagy on Communism (New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), p. 267.

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liberal wing, while a center group seemed to gravitate loosely around Janos Kadar. As a result, Rakosi did not command a majority in the Central Committee in the sense that a majority of its members approved of his policy. Until the 20th Congress of the CPSU, however, he had the Committee's support, since the ouster of Nagy indicated that Rakosi enjoyed the full backing of the Kremlin. But Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin was certain to encourage the opponents of Rakosi while at the same time it prevented him from reasserting his authority by the only possible means, Stalinist brutality. In fact, it shattered the little prestige he still possessed.

3. Such obtuseness on the part of the Soviet leadership would be hard to credit, were it not for the first hand evidence supplied by Nagy. Speaking of the rehabilitation and release of people unjustly condemned, Nagy quotes Khrushchev as having declared: "Rakosi is responsible for the arrests. Therefore he does not want to release these people. He knows that he is guilty and will compromise himself. But it is not permissible to denounce men and to throw suspicion on them." Nevertheless, Khrushchev threw in some good advice: "The rehabilitations should be carried out so as not to destroy Rakosi's authority."<sup>1</sup> Rakosi had apparently thought that the problem had been successfully solved by the release during Nagy's premiership of some 40 Social Democrats and of a number of Communist deviationists, among them Janos Kadar, whom he had imprisoned. He was mistaken, however, for he had in Nagy's words avoided "settling . . . the great trials, primarily the Rajk trial, frankly and thoroughly," and had attempted to "induce various comrades to hush up this affair . . ." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

Ibid., p. 297. The statements seem to have been made sometime in the summer of 1954.

<sup>2</sup>

Ibid., p. 297.

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4. With the indictment of Stalin, preceded, on February 21, 1956, in the pages of Pravda by the formal rehabilitation of Bela Kun, his foremost Hungarian victim, the matter acquired a new urgency, especially in view of Moscow's anxiety to placate Tito who was apparently making a test case out of the rehabilitation. A month later, the innocence of Rajk and his associates was officially attested and another batch of Social Democrats was set free, presumably with the idea that this act of clemency would pave the way for a revival of the popular front tactics recommended by the 20th Congress.

5. The chief effect on Hungary of the Congress's "historic" proceedings can hardly have been welcome in Moscow, for it was to weaken even more the prestige of the regime headed by Rakosi, the Stalinist, whom the Kremlin evidently had no intention of replacing by a real collective leadership. The fact that Rakosi stayed on in Moscow for two days of private conferences after the departure of the other members of the delegations to the 20th Congress was widely interpreted as a reconfirmation by the Kremlin of his incumbency. In his report to the Central Committee after his return on March 12, 1956, Rakosi merely admitted "that in connection with Stalin, whose merits are well known, a personality cult developed, which hampered collective leadership and the development of democracy in the party, and this was the origin of several serious political and ideological errors." But there was no mention of self-criticism. On the contrary, his chief regret was that his efforts to strengthen collective leadership and eradicate the cult of personality in Hungary had not yet been entirely successful. Rakosi argued with perfect plausibility, that the 20th Congress resolutions did not call for any significant change in the Hungarian party line, for they had been anticipated by the 20 June 1953 Resolution introducing the New Course. Far from admitting that he had successfully

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sabotaged it, Rakosi asserted that the line had unfortunately been distorted by Nagy's "rightist deviation," but that things had been once again set straight by the decisions of March 1955. The hopes of the Nagyists, that the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU would vindicate their stand, had now proved false, Rakosi concluded triumphantly. Therefore, all that was needed was to continue untiringly to strengthen socialist legality, collective leadership and party democracy - a conclusion adopted by the Central Committee in its 15 March 1956 resolution.

6. However, it soon became apparent to Rakosi that the situation was not quite the same in Hungary as in the USSR and that he should provide some justification for eventual harsher measures. Szabad Nep of 27 March 1956 therefore explained that owing to the fact that "peoples democracies" were still in a transition stage, the class enemy was stronger there than in the Soviet Union, making the use of sterner methods necessary. Whether by coincidence or not, a few days later Rakosi received warm personal greetings from Khrushchev and Bulganin on the occasion of Hungarian Liberation Day, 4 April.

7. As in Poland under the rule of the senescent Bierut, the liberal trend had grown strong in Hungary during Nagy's premiership, both in Communist literary circles and in the Party at large. It would be difficult to say who should get the credit for it. Without the outspoken criticisms of writers and poets, liberalism would hardly have made so many converts among the Party members, while on the other hand there is no doubt that Rakosi would have cracked down on the writers ruthlessly had it not been for their strong backing among the rank and file, and of course in the nation at large. This raises the question why he did not purge the Party drastically, for he had certainly proved that he was not particularly squeamish in such matters.

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The only plausible explanation seems to be, as mentioned above, that Stalinist methods were frowned upon in Moscow at the time, and that as experienced a leader as Rakosi was expected to do the trick of suppressing "revisionism" without recourse to terror. Rakosi probably calculated that the best way to reduce the pressure was to allow the intellectuals to let off steam. After all, their chief demands were for greater freedom of expression and creation, and, up to June 1956 at any rate, the vocal agitation was mainly confined to a comparatively small circle. At the same time, he counted on the soothing effect of some economic concessions, rehabilitations, amnesties and greater respect for "socialist legality" by the regular police and the courts, to be offset however by stepped up, but unobtrusive, activities of the secret police, the AVH. But, as events were to prove, he - and the Kremlin - had miscalculated. The campaign of the intellectuals permitted the spirit of rebellion to permeate deeper and deeper, even in the Party Central Committee, and leniency made Rakosi appear a mere "paper tiger." Especially after Khrushchev's condemnation of Stalin, Rakosi's concessions could only appear as being made from weakness, not from strength. The hunter had now become the hunted, and no amount of concessions would have made those whom he had terrorized so long forgive him the anguish he had caused them.

8. On the literary front, the "struggle" between liberals and Stalinists had been marked on 10 November 1955 by the drawing up by the Writers Union of a memorandum described in a Party resolution of 10 December as "an attack against Party policy." Although every Party member had of course the right to turn to the Central Committee, it was not permissible, the resolution stated, to collect signatures for such a purpose. The chief culprits, who were "sinking deeper and deeper into the mire of rightist mistakes" and had "voiced bourgeois slanders

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about the situation of workers and peasants . . . " which were "not of a literary nature but essentially political . . . ", were listed as Tibor Dery, Zoltan Zelk, Tamas Aczel, Tibor Meray, and Gyula Hay.

9. But strangely enough, the guilty writers were not arrested. Behind the scene efforts to "reeducate" - more exactly, to intimidate - them apparently failed, judging by Csillag's discouraged admission (20 January 1956) that "the authors are simply unwilling to accept the arguments of authority, " nor was the Party leadership willing to challenge their political sympathisers. The 20th Congress was of course hailed by the rebellious writers as a confirmation of the correctness of their views. The March 30 and April 3 meetings of the Writers Union were stormier than ever. Sandor Lukacsi described Rakosi's statement on Rajk's rehabilitation as "worthy of Judas." A number of members accused Rakosi of perpetuating Stalinist methods and demanded his resignation. A new politically reliable secretary of the Writers Union, proposed by Szalai, the Central Committee representative, was voted down 100 to 3, but in spite of dark hints that the rebels would be disciplined, again nothing happened.

10. Rakosi's position was indeed difficult. The writers were claiming that far from attacking the Party, they were only correctly interpreting the 20th Congress, a triumph for human dignity. "The personality cult poisoned our whole literature . . . The time has come for us to convert to the truth, the overall, unconditioned profound truth which serves the people and the Party. "

11. On the political front, Rakosi's position was not much easier. If he recanted, he reduced his prestige. If he cracked down on Party members guilty of indulging in the cult of personality (in other words on Stalinists, his own fraction) he was left to face practically single-handed

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the onslaught of the emboldened liberals. If he did not, his opponents found fresh ammunition in his forbearance. Szabad Nep of April 15, 1956, admitted the existence of widespread dissension within the Party, and even of a resurgence of Nagyist right-wing deviationism. Under the guise of criticism, "vile attacks were being made on the Party" and there were cases in district Party meetings when no one criticized a member who "slandered the whole socialist system." The paper also admitted the existence of widespread disaffection toward Rakosi personally.

12. Rakosi's personal unpopularity, both with the Party and the population at large, was undoubtedly an important factor in the situation. To begin with he was a Jew, and even not particularly anti-semitic Hungarians resented being ruled by a non-Magyar. Furthermore, he was not only a creature of Stalin - whose sadistic cruelty had now been acknowledged by Moscow itself - but, unlike some of his colleagues in other satellite countries, he had acquired the reputation of having been one of Stalin's willing accomplices. Even after the 20th Congress, nobody believed that he had actually renounced his terroristic methods, only that they had gone further underground. Rakosi's concessions, his mild treatment of the rebellious intellectuals - none of whom was reported to have been arrested, although many, particularly journalists, lost their jobs - the amnesties, the release of prisoners, Archbishop Mindszenty and Grösz among them, the removal on May 10, 1956, of the barbed wire fence on the Austrian border, and the absence of reports of widespread arrests, did him no good. Nobody believed he had been converted, merely that he was scared and was biding his opportunity. The result was that during the spring of 1956 hostility to Rakosi kept growing and the popularity of his opponents increasing, chiefly that of Nagy, but also of Janos Kadar, whose position might be described as right of center.

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13. Rakosi's embarrassing position was very evident in his speech to the Party activists on May 18, 1956. It included a mixture of vague promises, warnings against abuse of criticism, and boasts of past achievements. The only unexpected statements were the admission of having been himself guilty of fostering the "personality cult" and of deserving part of the blame for serious infringements of "socialist legality," and an ominous assurance of solicitude for the state security and defense organs, guaranteeing "that they will be able to do their duty successfully and with zeal."

14. The economic measures taken by the regime to allay discontent were not particularly dramatic. In April, price reductions, mainly on clothing and cosmetics, were decreed, and in May the minimum wage of some 100,000 workers was raised, and minor steps toward economic decentralization were taken. The Second Five Year Plan, published on April 27, 1956, held out a promise of a slight improvement in living conditions by reducing investment in heavy industry from 41.3 to 28% and increasing investment in agriculture from 13.6 to 17%, it being admitted that "agricultural production has not risen appreciably above the pre-war level." But at the same time, the plan called for a "renewed development of the socialist development of agriculture" i.e. a resumption of the collectivization drive, which, since forceful measures were allegedly ruled out, would rely on the material inducements promised the collectives. In other words, in spite of vague promises of greater incentives to individual farmers, 78% of the Hungarian peasants were threatened with a choice between joining collectives or else going without fertilizer, machinery, and other necessities.

15. In an apparent attempt to disarm opponents of the regime by convincing the people that Rakosi's belated self-criticism had been sincere and that the 20th Congress

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of the CPSU did make a difference in Hungary, the Party press and radio were allowed - or encouraged - to publish outspoken criticisms of past conditions, frequently implying that some of the evils still persisted. For example Nepszava of May 31, 1956, carried a strong condemnation of the National Assembly's enforced inactivity, which was declared to be a violation of the Constitution. Szabad Nep of May 25 conceded that "there was a time when people did not dare to speak frankly . . . because of fear of the consequences. This atmosphere must be changed." On the 22nd and 26th, the paper warned against "violating our own laws, even when dealing with former exploiters . . . It is clear that social background itself is no crime." On June 11, the paper carried an article by the Deputy Minister of the Interior assuring the public that "we are waging a determined and energetic fight" to put an end to police abuses which still persisted, and the text of a resolution of the Central Committee of the Soviet Union urging closer ties with Yugoslavia and calling upon its members to "scourge mistakes courageously and relentlessly . . . We will not tolerate the harming of anyone in our ranks because of his opinions. On the contrary, we say: have fear, you, the suppressors of criticism . . . "

16. Nothing Rakosi did or said seemed to have any effect. Open terrorism was ruled out, for the time being at any rate, and as for his promises, nobody believed them. The government and Party apparatus appeared to be paralyzed as a result of the split between the Stalinists and the "liberals."

17. During May and June, meetings of writers, journalists, economists, historians and others at the Pet8fi Club, a recently organized affiliate of the Communist Youth Union, were held with increasing frequency and in a rising atmosphere of rebelliousness - probably not

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unconnected with the revelation on June 4 of the full text of Khrushchev's secret speech. On June 19, Rajk's widow appealed to the large gathering of Communist members present to avenge her husband and to remove the assassins guilty of this and other crimes against "patriotic" Hungarians. On the 27th an overflow audience of more than 2,000 heard Dery, Losonczy, Hay, Tardos, and others denounce Rakosi as the man guilty of the failure of Communism in Hungary and demand the abolition of censorship, his removal and the return of Nagy.

18. Needless to say, these developments in Hungary had not left Moscow indifferent. Suslov paid a short visit to Budapest at the beginning of June, and, as it coincided with Tito's triumphal arrival in Moscow, it was rumored that there was a connection between the two events, for Rajk's perfunctory rehabilitation and the settlement of the Hungarian debt to Yugoslavia at the end of May were not believed to have sufficed to placate Tito. Whatever the purpose of Suslov's visit, it did not seem to have been achieved. On June 25, immediately after Tito's departure, Rakosi journeyed to Moscow. By the time of his return to Budapest, the situation had been further aggravated by the June 27 Petöfi Club meeting and the excitement provoked by the Poznan uprising. Rakosi, presumably in accordance with the decisions reached in Moscow, at last reacted vigorously. On June 30, he called a meeting of the Central Committee which adopted a resolution condemning "the anti-party activity of the spokesmen for the Nagy group" and decided to expel from the Party the most outspoken speakers at the June 27 meeting, Dery and Tardos among them.<sup>1</sup> At the same time Rakosi demanded that the Petöfi

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it has been reliably reported that the majority of those present did not realize that the condemnation of the Petöfi Club proceedings was to be considered

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Club officers call off the next meeting. Not only was the request turned down, but the meeting adopted a resolution inviting the Central Committee to cancel the expulsions of Dery and Tardos, and a number of low level party organizations adopted resolutions rejecting the condemnation of the liberal wing of the Party, known in Hungary as the right wing.

19. Rakosi's reaction followed the classic stick and carrot pattern. On July 11, 1956, the creation of a permanent Commission to eliminate judicial shortcomings was announced. On the 13th, Minister of Justice Molnar explained that the reforms he had announced in June would include a new electoral law, new procedures for the National Assembly, and increased guarantees of citizens' and press rights. On the same day, the government announced that all local planning would henceforth be done by local councils instead of by the central authorities and that a commission would be set up to reduce the cost-price gap. And on July 15, a Supreme Court justice went so far as to condemn the 1952 deportations from Budapest as having been "without legal basis." On the other hand, Rakosi countered with a vigorous press campaign against "right wing deviation," a barrage behind which he was, according to a number of concordant reports, maturing a plan to strike a decisive blow at his opponents. Not the least of these were to be found in the Party's Central Committee, where demands for another meeting by members, incensed by the manner in which the June 30 resolution had been put over, were becoming more and more insistent. Rakosi however first went to Moscow (7-11 July 1956). His return

a formal resolution and be published as such. According to another version, the Resolution was adopted by a minority group of members, unknown to the others. The Resolution was, however, implicitly approved by Moscow by its publication in Pravda of July 8, 1956.

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was followed four days later by the arrival of Mikoyan, who conferred with Nagy, Kadar and other notables.

20. Rakosi reportedly unfolded to Mikoyan a plan to arrest some 400 of his most prominent opponents, including Nagy, of course, but Mikoyan rejected the plan, allegedly after a telephone conversation with Khrushchev. Whether, as reported by an East German broadcast of July 19, 1956, Rakosi, since his solution of the crisis had been rejected, simply declined to be further responsible for the situation and asked to be relieved of his post, recommending as his successor Deputy Premier Gerö, or whether Mikoyan demanded his resignation, the fact is that the appointment of Gerö as First Party Secretary was announced on July 18, 1956.

21. Well aware that the hostility to Rakosi stemmed from opposition to his political line, but partly also from his personal unpopularity, the Soviet leaders undoubtedly calculated that his removal would reduce anti-regime sentiment sufficiently to enable his successor to carry on very much as before, with only some superficial window-dressing and fence-mending. Although Rakosi was later to be made the chief scapegoat for the October revolution, his relations with Moscow after his resignation indicate no resentment against him for his failure. Rather does his treatment suggest that he was being granted the highest reward of a good Communist: martyrdom - if only moral - for the cause. Khrushchev undoubtedly realized that Rakosi had been charged with the really impossible task of remaining in power and maintaining his authority after de-Stalinization in a country where, thanks to the Nagy interlude, intra-party opposition had had a chance to gain great strength. If he ignored the 20th Congress, he stood condemned by the Moscow Sanhedrin itself; if he conformed, he sapped his own authority.

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Gerő's Lieutenancy

22. Rakosi presented his resignation to a plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee on the grounds of age and ill-health, but he also admitted mistakes in the fields of "socialist legality" and "cult of the individual" which had made Party work more difficult, diminished the Party's power of attraction, hindered the development of collective leadership and of constructive criticism, and offered weak points for the enemy to attack. Especially after the 20th Congress and Khrushchev's speech, when it became clear to him, Rakosi said, that the weight and effect of his mistakes were greater than he had thought, "it was up to him to take the lead in repairing those mistakes. If rehabilitation has at times proceeded sluggishly . . . if a certain relapse was noticed last year in the cult of personality, if criticism and self-criticism together with collective leadership have developed at a slower pace, if sectarian and dogmatic views have not been combatted resolutely enough - then for all this, undoubtedly serious responsibility rests upon me . . . "

23. Naturally, everybody expected Rakosi's successor to be a man of the type of the Budapest Party Chief Istvan Kovacs, a strong critic of Rakosi and a "moderate." But the Central Committee plenum voted for Erno Gerő, like Rakosi a Jew, a former Moscow trained associate of Bela Kun, and Rakosi's closest collaborator since 1948. Presumably to sweeten the pill for the right wing, Gyorgy Marosan and Janos Kadar, considered "moderates" with nationalist leanings, were elected to the Politburo, and Gyula Kallai to the Central Committee. On the other hand, the new Politburo included the Stalinists Jozsef Revai and Karoly Kiss, the former (like Gerő) a Jew trained in Moscow, but no known supporters of Nagy.

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24. As Gerð's speech to the Plenum and the subsequent resolution showed, the Party line was to remain practically unchanged. It provided somewhat reduced investments in industry, reduction of the excessive defense outlays, abolition of the "peace loan," more lenient treatment of kulaks, and higher standards of living<sup>1</sup> but otherwise it merely restated the intention of carrying out the decisions already taken under the Rakosi regime with regard to socialist legality, collective leadership and rehabilitations. The former Politburo was blamed for "hesitation and wavering" in carrying out the March 1956 resolution, the "leading organs" of the Party were criticized for failure to consult the Party, "sectarianism and right wing opportunism . . . both deeply rooted in the Party" were singled out as the targets of the sharpest struggle, and the March 1955 resolution excluding Nagy from the Party was reaffirmed. The resolution candidly admitted that sectarianism "has manifested and is manifesting itself in the fact that often instead of political enlightenment it employs administrative measures," and that "one often sees, even lately," violation of the voluntary principle in farm collectivization.

25. Notable for its absence from the resolution was any mention pro or con of a "Hungarian road to socialism." But the position of the Gerð regime was made sufficiently clear by the statement that "the Party is strengthening its ties with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union because both Parties hold identical views in every ideological question . . . "

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<sup>1</sup> The First Five Year Plan had set a target of a 50% increase by 1955. Actually the increase had admittedly been only 6%. The 18 July Plenum promised a rise of 25% by 1960, that is, if achieved, a 31% improvement in 10 years instead of 50% in 5 years.

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26. On the other hand, the resolution laid considerable emphasis on the need to strengthen the Patriotic People's Front. If the Party really hoped the PPF could successfully "popularize the measures taken by the Party and the government, " all one can say is that the Communist leadership realized its own total incapacity to win over public opinion better than one might have expected.

27. Although perfectly logical after Gerő's own appointment, the revelation (made in the closing hours of the Plenum on July 21) that Rakosi was still a member of the Central Committee, the Presidential Council, and the National Assembly, came as a shock to the Hungarian people. Judging by subsequent developments and statements, one must assume either that the regime's actions belied its words, or else that nobody believed in the sincerity of its professed good intentions, in spite of conciliatory gestures, such as the appointment of the "nativist" Communist, Gyula Kallai, to head the Party CC's cultural section, or the announcement by a Party spokesman on August 4, that Nagy was welcome to join the Party, on condition he bound himself to accept the Party policy. A few days later, Gerő let a speech by Kadar, explaining Nagy's "deviation" as the result of Rakosi's and Gerő's errors, pass without reacting. On 8 September Irodalmi Ujsag published an impassioned appeal by Gyula Hay, in which he demanded that "literature shall be forbidden nothing which is not prohibited by the laws of society . . . " Until all forms of censorship were abolished "we cannot speak of literary freedom. At most we can speak of a temporary and relative liberalism which can be cancelled at any moment. "

28. On September 14, 1956, 10 priests were "rehabilitated, " and on the 15th Zoltan Tildy, a former president of Hungary, appeared again on the public scene,

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after years of house arrest. In the hope of conciliating the intellectuals, the Party sanctions inflicted in 1955 on eight members of the Writers Union, were cancelled, but in vain. At a meeting of the Union members which opened the same day, September 16, a number of speakers demanded Nagy's rehabilitation; all officers of the Union suspected of Rakosist sympathies were eliminated; and after being strongly criticized, a number of Stalinist magazine editors were removed from their posts.

29. Nothing daunted, Deputy Premier Antal Apro issued a statement inviting intellectuals to participate more actively in political affairs and promising university professors greater independence.

30. In an attempt to allay the popular disaffection stemming from economic causes, the regime announced concessions to workers and peasants, designed to remove grievances and increase production. Deputy Premier Erdei informed the peasants that they could in future sell their crops at free market prices, a concession amounting to a 28% increase in farm income, and on August 23, a decision of the Council of Ministers provided that new members joining collectives would be paid for the assets they contributed. However, these concessions could not be expected to increase food production before the following year and they provided no solution for other difficulties, such as shortages of fertilizer and of tractor fuel, described as serious by Szabad Nep (September 22, 1956). The immediate prospects were made all the gloomier by a shortage of coal, which had already forced a sharp reduction in transportation facilities and threatened a cold winter for many Hungarians. The USSR had, it is true, granted a modest 100 million ruble emergency loan, but the greater part had had to be used to acquire vitally needed industrial raw materials in order to avoid widespread shutdowns.

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31. Radical, "Nagyist," economic reforms being ruled out, the Gerő regime was reduced to attempts to mollify the workers by conciliatory gestures. A decree on employment, published in Szabad Nep of September 11, enjoined on all concerned strict compliance with the labor code and granted workers the right to quit an enterprise not respecting its obligations. Pursuant to a Trade Union Council resolution demanding that conditions for worker control be established and that unions be assigned a prominent part in solving production problems and improving working conditions, a decree issued on October 14 broadened the authority of plant managers in the determination of wage payment methods but also the power of the unions to defend their members' interests. The government also announced its intention to encourage private craftsmen, one of the policies which had figured in Nagy's program.

32. As another earnest of its good intentions, and as a gesture to Yugoslavia, the Party leadership decided immediately after the meeting between Gerő and Tito in the Crimea to organize a state funeral for Rajk and three associates, who had been "innocently condemned and executed," by "sadistic criminals who emerged from the gutter of the personality cult" as Ferenc Munnich was to describe them at the funeral on October 6, a mass political demonstration, in which some 200,000 people took part. Apro assured them that the Party would call the guilty to account, and Szabad Nep wrote the following day that "the violent demonstration was a pledge . . . that we will also remember the dark practice of tyranny, lawlessness, slander, and defrauding of the people." A few days later, Lutheran Bishop Ordass was released. A number of former Security Police officials, and former Defense Minister Mihaly Farkas, and his son, a leading AVH official, were arrested, and the dismissal of a number of judges compromised during the Rakosi era was announced, but the

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good effect of all this was more than offset by the news given on October 16 by Nep Szabad that Rakosi himself had been allowed to leave the country.

33. Gerö and his followers, however, apparently flattered themselves that they had successfully rolled with the punch and that the crisis was over. On October 11, 1956, the Budapest Radio commented: "We are witnessing times of heated, purifying arguments . . . Debates are held /at the Petöfi Club, at works and council meetings. These very debates furnish further proof that in Hungary it has never been a question of Stalinism or reaction . . . No opinions which would necessitate self-defense for socialism have become apparent . . . Everyone . . . wanted alliance and friendship with the Soviet Union . . . Our public life recognizes one problem: are we building socialism correctly and successfully by following a road which is suitable for the Hungarian people . . . ? Non-Marxists of course defend their views . . . but they acknowledge that it was the courageous and steadfast Communists who were the first to break the silence of the bad years . . . The new political morals mean that the forms of public life are open to every Hungarian who wishes for a human life, socialist democracy, and above all, the reign of decency in this world."

34. This official optimism, however, was not shared by everyone. On the same day Szabad Nep carried an article by Geza Losonczy, in which he referred to Party resolutions that had either partly or wholly remained scraps of paper and asserted that a deep gap still separated words from reality. A few days later, on October 14, Losonczy, addressing the Kossuth Club<sup>1</sup> in Debrecen,

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<sup>1</sup> The Kossuth Club had been founded in June by the Debrecen intellectuals with the same aims as the Budapest Petöfi Club.

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charged that Hungarian economic policy had remained essentially unchanged since the 20th Congress, and that the Patriotic People's Front was not allowed to exercise its statutory right to propose the appointment and recall of ministers.

35. The 14th of October witnessed two further important developments. Gerð left on a visit to Belgrade. In the absence of any urgent problems to be settled between Yugoslavia and Hungary, his absence from Budapest during the crucial week preceding the revolution could only be explained by a Russian interest in following up the recent Tito-Khrushchev talks. As far as is known, the visit was barren of results, but was significant as proof of both Khrushchev's and Gerð's lack of appreciation of the real temper of the Hungarian people.

36. Others were more perspicacious. Vlaiko Begovic, director of the Belgrade International Institute of International Politics and Economy, wrote from Budapest on October 14: ". . . People refuse to live in the old way. Conditions for an uprising have been created. Who will lead it when the working class is disoriented, the Party lags behind events, and has lost authority over the masses? . . ."<sup>1</sup> And in an account (written in October) of his conversations with the staff of the Hungarian School of Economics, Begovic said he had found that the members had "no confidence in their state or Party leadership, and considerable distrust has accumulated against the Soviet political leadership, because of its stubborn support for Rakosi . . . One has the impression that the existing economic leadership has been compromised in the fullest sense of the word . . . and that they are trying to find a way out as soon as possible."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tanyug, November 18, 1956

<sup>2</sup> Borba, November 10, 1956

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37. On October 14, Szabad Nep published the decision of the Politburo to annul its 1955 decision to expel Nagy from the Party, "because the political mistakes he had committed do not justify his expulsion," a considerable part having been played by the "personal bias of Comrade Matyas Rakosi." The Politburo recommended that the Central Committee should reexamine the matter and "throw light on the mistakes actually committed by Imre Nagy and on the overstatements and incorrect findings in the previous Party resolution." The paper also published the text of Nagy's letter of October 4 asking for his reinstatement, prompted by his "anxiety for the unity of the Party" and his desire to help solve the "arduous tasks of building Socialism." Nagy stated ambiguously that he agreed with the Party's main political line, as determined by the June 1953 resolution and the Third Party Congress of 1954, to place the entire national economy "on the foundations of socialism in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism in accordance with the special conditions existing in Hungary." He also agreed "in principle with those aims of the CC resolution of July 1956, which led the Party along the road of socialist democratism in the spirit of the 20th Congress of the CPSU," and, although he differed on several points, he considered the resolution binding on him.

The Gathering Storm

38. By October 16, the ferment had spread to the Hungarian youth. At a students' meeting at Gyor, the demand for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops was publicly raised for the first time by Gyula Hay, although he declared that Russians were welcome as guests. During the following days, which brought news of developments in Poland, student demonstrations spread to the Budapest, Szeged, and Debrecen universities. An effort by the youth organization, DISZ, to pacify the students by concessions

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in the matter of courses on Marxism-Leninism and of living conditions, remained fruitless. The students simply seceded from DISZ and reestablished the former student union, MEFESZ, declaring it to be completely independent, but acknowledging Marxism-Leninism as its ideological basis. The Party leadership sought to temporize. Basic agreement with the students' demands was announced and measures of compliance were promised. But the obvious nervousness of the authorities merely encouraged further demands. On 22 October, mass meetings were staged in Budapest. The most important of the students' meetings, held at the Technological University, adopted a sixteen-point program. It included the following demands: Withdrawal of Soviet troops; readjustment of relations with the USSR on the basis of equality and non-intervention; an early Party congress of new, democratically-elected members; formation of an Imre Nagy government and elimination of the criminal leaders of the Stalinist-Rakosi era; the trial of Rakosi and Farkas; secret general elections; the right to strike; reorganization of the entire economic life of Hungary; publication of trade agreements and figures on reparation payments and the Russian uranium concession; revision of work norms and wages; equal treatment for individual farmers and revision of delivery norms; revision of political trials and release of innocent prisoners; complete freedom of expression and opinion; demolition of the Stalin statue; readoption of the old Hungarian Kossuth arms and a new, more traditional, Hungarian uniform. The two last points were an expression of solidarity with the Polish youth and workers "in connection with the Polish national independence movement," and the announcement that the students would gather the following day, October 23, to lay a wreath at the statue of General Bem - a procession in which the workers were invited to join.

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39. The ten-point proclamation issued on 22 October by the Petöfi Club was less radical. In effect, it demanded besides full publicity for all facts, including foreign trade and uranium exploitation, the annulment of the resolution on literature and the Petöfi Club, implementation of the program of Imre Nagy, who, together "with other comrades fighting for socialist democratism and for Leninist principles [should] occupy a worthy place in the leadership . . . " There was no mention of the withdrawal of Soviet troops, merely a demand for complete equality "in order further to strengthen Soviet-Hungarian friendship. "

40. The seven-point proclamation issued by the Writers Union on 23 October followed similar lines. It went somewhat further however, inasmuch as, although professing allegiance to socialism and firm opposition to "all counterrevolutionary attempts and aspirations, " it demanded "free socialist production and exchange of goods" and "free and secret election of all people's representatives" - which, if granted, were more than likely to spell the end of communism.<sup>1</sup>

41. The Politburo met from 10:00 to 12:00 AM on 23 October and accepted Marosan's proposal to ban the students' demonstration, but it rejected his further recommendation that the "forces of public order receive orders to use their firearms."<sup>2</sup> Two hours later, however, the ban on public meetings was withdrawn.

<sup>1</sup> It may be pointed out here that by October 28, however, both the Writers Union and the Petöfi Club, as well as other groups of intellectuals, had caught up with the students. Their joint appeal contained all the more important of the students 16 points, and in addition, the assurance that the land and factories would not be returned to the capitalists and landowners, but really become the property of the workers and peasants.

<sup>2</sup> According to the statement made by Marosan, in a speech

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42. The peaceful demonstration of students and workers at General Bem's statue in the afternoon of October 23 was followed by mass meetings in Stalin and Parliament Squares. The demands of the students, writers, and unions were read to cheering crowds. Waving Polish and Hungarian national flags, they roared: "Send the Red Army home, " "We want free and secret elections, " and "Death to Rakosi, " but at the same time they carried gigantic posters of Lenin.<sup>1</sup> In reply to cries of "We want new leaders . . . We trust Imre Nagy, " Nagy appeared, and was cheered, but when he began his speech with the words: "Dear Comrades, " he was whistled down. "Nagy told them the historical situation was complicated and everyone should go home and wait for developments. The whistling started again . . . " Finally, he asked everyone to sing the national anthem.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Revolution Victorious

43. At 8:00 PM, Ger8, who had returned from Belgrade that morning, broadcast an uncompromising speech in which he condemned "nationalistic demonstrations" and those who "tried to loosen the ties between our Party and the glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union . . . The Soviet Union concluded agreements with us on the basis of full equality and . . . still continues that policy. " The effect of the speech was to inflame the crowds still more. An hour later the statue of Stalin was toppled from its pedestal, and soon afterwards when AVH men fired on the crowd assembled before the Radio building to demand

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to the Csepel workers on 25 July 1957, which has not been denied.

<sup>1</sup>Sefton Delmer, in Daily Express (London), October 24, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>Time, January 7, 1957.

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the broadcasting of the students' manifesto, the demonstrators stormed the building and followed up their success by storming the Szabad Nep building. The Hungarian revolution had begun and, in the early hours of October 24, Soviet Army tanks went into action.

44. As a number of adequate accounts of the Hungarian Revolution are already in existence, no attempt to describe it in detail will be made in this survey, which will be limited to a brief account of developments in governmental and Party spheres.

45. During the night of 23-24 October, Mikoyan and Suslov had arrived from Moscow. At 7:00 AM on October 24, Radio Budapest broadcast the announcement that the Central Committee and the Politburo had been reorganized, Imre Nagy appointed prime minister with Hegedus as his deputy, some notorious Rakosi adherents replaced with moderate elements, but that Gerö had been reconfirmed as First Party Secretary. At 8:45, the introduction of martial law over Nagy's signature was announced, and at 9:00, the intervention of Soviet forces "to restore order at the request of the Hungarian government" was confirmed. At 11:00, Nagy addressed the nation, calling on the insurgents to lay down their arms, and promising the development of socialism in a "manner corresponding to our own national characteristics, " "radical improvement of the workers' living conditions" and "systematic democratization. " But he also spoke about "hostile elements" who had "joined the ranks of peacefully-demonstrating Hungarian youth" and "turned against the People's Democracy, against the power of the people" and asked the people to line up behind the Party and the government.

46. Although there were many people who believed Nagy was acting at pistol's point - as he later claimed in a radio address on October 30, 1956 - and that announce-

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ments were being made in his name without his concurrence, - it seeming hard to believe that he had actually asked for Soviet intervention or approved of the decree of summary jurisdiction - still the prevailing impression was that he had identified himself with the Gerð faction, and his appeal went unheeded. Presumably in order to obtain clarification of Nagy's position, a large crowd gathered in front of the Parliament Building on the morning of October 25, demanding that he receive a deputation and shouting "down with Gerð."

47. Under still unexplained circumstances, AVH men and Russian tanks opened fire on the unarmed demonstrators, causing numerous casualties.<sup>1</sup> According to The New York Times correspondent in Budapest, it was this massacre which revived the revolt, which appeared to have been virtually quelled the day before by the Soviet forces.<sup>2</sup>

48. Whatever their long-range plans to deal with the Hungarians, Mikoyan and Suslov's first step was to oust Gerð and to have Kadar appointed First Secretary of the Party in his place, although only the day before Kadar had assured the Hungarians, in true Gerð style, that "it is only with glowing anger that we can speak of this attack by which counterrevolutionary, reactionary elements have risen . . . against our people's democratic order . . . ." The announcement of this appointment, broadcast on October 25 at noon, was followed by another address by Kadar on similar lines, and an address by Nagy, in which he too described the revolt as the work of "a small group of counterrevolutionary

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<sup>1</sup>Two British Communist eye-witnesses, Coutts and Fryer, have expressed the belief that the firing was started by the Hungarian AVH men as a provocation. Peter Fryer, Hungarian Tragedy. (London, 1956).

<sup>2</sup>J. MacCormac, The New York Times, October 27, 1957.

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provocateurs" supported, it was true, by part of the workers of Budapest, embittered "by the political and economic mistakes of the past." Nagy promised to carry out sweeping reforms as soon as order was restored and to begin talks with the Soviet Union on the basis of equality concerning the withdrawal of Soviet troops, "whose intervention was necessitated by the vital interests of our Socialist order." This was apparently satisfactory to the intellectuals, for Gabor Tanczos, secretary of the Petöfi Club, and Gyula Hay issued appeals for popular support of Kadar and Nagy, but to most Hungarians the speech appeared a confirmation of Nagy's betrayal of the revolutionaries' cause. Heavy fighting continued in Budapest between the insurgents and the Russian tanks, assisted by the remnants of the AVH. Revolutionary councils and workers' councils sprang up everywhere. In the provinces they met with but little opposition from the AVH or interference from the Soviet forces, where present. The general demand was that the Russians should withdraw, after which quiet would be restored, and not the other way around.

49. On October 26, the Central Committee of the Party issued a declaration promising the "election" of a new national government which would begin negotiations with the Soviet Government on the basis of complete equality, the return of the Soviet troops to their bases after the restoration of order, and the elaboration of all the necessary changes "in our people's economy, farm, and People's Front policy, our Party's leadership and other activities," approving the election of workers' councils, but reiterating its firm resolve to "defend the achievements of our people's democracy." But news that the revolt was spreading instead of subsiding kept flowing in. On the evening of October 26, Gerö and Hegedus were reported to have fled from the Party headquarters and sought Russian protection, but it was not until October 28, that Nagy appears to have

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been able to act entirely free from physical intimidation, although the government reshuffle promised on the 26th had been effected in the meantime. On October 27, four members of the Small-holders Party, among them Zoltan Tildy and Bela Kovacs, and one member of the National Peasant Party, became members of the Cabinet, while some notorious Stalinists including Hidas, Piros, and Bata were dropped. On that same night, the Soviet tanks made a last desperate but unsuccessful effort to subdue the Budapest rebels, and on the following day, October 28, at noon, the Hungarian Government ordered whatever police forces it still disposed of to cease fire. That night, Premier Nagy broadcast a speech in which he announced that the new government rejected the view of the "formidable popular movements as a counter-revolution"; rather was it, he declared, the result of the "grave crimes committed during the historic period just passed. . . which led to the tragic fratricidal fight in which so many patriots died on both sides." He promised increased wages, amnesty, and reorganization of the police, approved "the new organs of democratic self-government" and a new flag, and announced that "the Hungarian Government has come to an agreement with the Soviet Government whereby Soviet forces shall withdraw immediately from Budapest . . . and has started negotiations to settle relations between the two countries with regard to the withdrawal of Soviet forces stationed in Hungary . . . in the spirit of Soviet-Hungarian friendship."

50. Radio Miskolc, reflecting the reaction of the insurgents, declared itself only partly satisfied with Nagy's statement; it objected strongly to the inclusion of the AVH men among the "patriots" and to the fact that talks on the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops were to start only later. However, as Nagy explained on October 29 to the chairman of the South Budapest Revolutionary Council, while the negotiations with the Russian commanders were in progress, he could not give any assurance that the

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Soviet troops would actually leave even Budapest, for it did not depend on him. He also warned against excessive demands, for if the Russians were to fear Hungary would leave the Communist Bloc, they would refuse to withdraw.

51. The Party also realized, as Radio Budapest explained on October 28, that "everything happened later than it should, when the masses were ready to resort to coercion . . . The actions of the Central Committee did not even correspond to the will and demands of the Communists . . . But until now [they] had no right to express their opinion . . . This has changed now . . . " Accordingly, the Committee had decided, it was announced, to "transfer its mandate " to a six-member presidium, with Kadar as chairman and Antal Apro, Karoly Kiss, Ferenc Münnich, Imre Nagy and Zoltan Szanto as members. In practice, this meant the end of the Central Committee.

The Lull in the Storm

52. During the last days of October, the fighting died down as some of the Soviet troops began evacuating Budapest, at the same time however occupying strategic airports on the pretext of evacuating dependents and wounded by air, and taking up positions around Budapest.

53. In pursuit of his difficult task of winning the allegiance of the still suspicious insurgents, Nagy announced on October 30 the government's decision to abolish the one-party system and to set up a coalition government. Members of the new inner cabinet were to be Nagy himself; two other Communists, Kadar and Losonczy; two members of the Small-holders Party, Tildy and Kovacs; a member of the Peasant Petöfi Party, and the men to be nominated by the Social Democrats. Nagy again assured his listeners that he was going to request the Soviet Union to withdraw its

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troops from all of Hungary, Tildy promised free elections and immediate abolition of compulsory crop deliveries, and Kadar expressed his full approval of the government's policy.

54. Optimism reached its height when the text of the October 30 Declaration of the Soviet Government on the "Principles for further developing and strengthening friendship and cooperation between the USSR and other Socialist Countries" became known. The Soviet government reaffirmed therein the Leninist principle of equality of nations, respect for the specific features of each country, and willingness to discuss with other socialist countries the elimination of any possibility of violation of the principles of national sovereignty, mutual benefit and equality in economic relations, and the desirability of withdrawing Soviet advisers. It declared itself ready to examine the question of the Soviet troops stationed in the countries of signatories of the Warsaw Treaty. With specific reference to Hungary, the Soviet Government stated that it had ordered its troops to evacuate Budapest as soon as requested by the Hungarian Government, since their presence "might serve as a pretext for the aggravation of the situation," and announced its readiness to begin negotiations on the question of Soviet forces in Hungary.

55. On October 31, Nagy announced that he had already begun negotiations concerning the withdrawal of Hungary from the Warsaw alliance, presumably with Mikoyan and Suslov, who were in Budapest; according to Igazsag of November 1, Kadar who was present strongly backed Nagy's demands. But at the same time, news of the entry of massive Soviet reinforcements into Eastern Hungary and of the encirclement of the capital by the units which had withdrawn earlier began to accumulate. On November 1, the Soviet Ambassador, Andropov, in reply

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to Nagy's protest, assured him that his government stood by its declaration and that the new arrivals were only intended to relieve the men who had been fighting. He proposed the designation of delegates to discuss political and technical questions. But at 2:00 PM, Nagy informed Andropov that Soviet troops continued to cross the border, belying the Soviet declaration, and that Hungary was therefore forwarding a complaint to the United Nations, withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact, and declaring its neutrality. These decisions were ratified by the Council of Ministers, without dissent, Kadar being present. That same night, at 9:00, Kadar announced over the radio his full solidarity with the "glorious uprising" in which the "people had shaken off the Rakosi regime . . . achieved freedom for the people and independence for the country." He was proud of the Communists who "had prepared the uprising." But the uprising had reached a crossroads, and he feared the danger of an "open counter-revolution" and of a foreign intervention. "In these momentous hours, the Communists who fought against Rakosi's despotism have decided to form a new party." The new party, which every worker "who is not responsible for the criminal policy and mistakes of the Rakosi clique" was invited to join was to be called the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party and would do "its share in fighting for the consolidation of independence and democracy." A preparatory committee composed of Nagy, Losonczy, Lukacs, Szanto, Donath, and Kadar himself had been set up to organize the new party.

56. On the same night of November 1, the revolutionary committee of the principal Budapest factories called off the general strike, the workers having decided to support the government, which had "fulfilled the main points of their demands." The Transdanubian National Council broadcast on November 2 the assurance of its confidence in the Nagy government and the calling off of the strike; General Maleter also declared the Army's support for the government.

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57. By November 3, the former political parties had been reconstituted and the Presidium of the Republic announced the formation of a truly national government, with Nagy as premier. It included three other Communists, Kadar, Losonczy, and General Maleter; three Small-holders, Bela Kovacs, Tildy and Istvan Szabo; three Social Democrats, among them Anna Kethly, and two members of the Petöfi Party (formerly National Peasant Party), among them Istvan Bibó.

58. That night, the government issued a statement, according to which all four parties in the coalition were in agreement "to retain from the socialist achievements and results everything that can and must be used in a free, democratic, and socialist country, in accordance with the wish of the people, . . . to retain the most sincere and warmest friendly, economic and cultural relations with every socialist country, even when we have achieved neutrality," to continue the negotiations with the Soviet Union for the withdrawal of its troops and recognition of the country's neutrality and independence, and to make every effort to prevent or punish anarchist and counter-revolutionary activities.

#### The Defeat of the Revolution

59. As agreed between Nagy and the Soviet Ambassador that morning, negotiations had started in the afternoon of November 3 between a Hungarian delegation, headed by General Maleter, and a Soviet military delegation, on the technical details of the evacuation of Hungary by the Soviet forces. During the night, the Hungarian delegates were arrested by the Soviet Security Police and at 5:00 AM on November 4, Nagy announced over the radio that "today at daybreak Soviet troops attacked our capital with the obvious intent of overthrowing the legal Hungarian govern-

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ment. Our troops are in combat . . . " Shortly afterwards it was announced that the Nagy government had notified the UN of the Soviet attack, at 8:00 Gyula Hay broadcast a last desperate appeal of the Writers Union for help from the West, and a few hours later the Soviet troops were in control of Budapest.

60. In the meantime, at 6:00 on November 4, the Szolnok Radio had broadcast an announcement by Janos Kadar, who, as Istvan Dobi, the President of the Presidential Council, was to tell the National Assembly on May 9, 1957, had "managed, accompanied by a few of his faithful political friends, to get across to the Soviet troops and asked for their help, " that the Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant government has been formed, with himself as premier, Ferenc Münnich as his deputy, and Marosan and Apro among the members of the cabinet.

61. Kadar acknowledged in his announcement that the mistakes and illegalities of the Rakosi-Gerő clique had "rightly discontented the workers, " but claimed that "the reactionaries are now seeking to return the factories to the capitalists and the land to the big landowners, " and that "we must put an end to the excesses of the counter-revolutionaries. " For this, according to Kadar, a strong government was needed, apparently a government headed by himself and composed exclusively of Communists. Kadar's fifteen-point program was practically identical with Nagy's, including as it did securing Hungary's national sovereignty and independence, protection of socialist achievements, a substantial improvement of the living standard by modifying the Five-Year Plan to fit the country's capacity, "broad development of democracy in the interest of the workers" and "workers' management of enterprises, " abolition of compulsory deliveries, assistance to individual farmers, support for retail trade and

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craftsmen, and the solemn assurance that no worker would be "persecuted for participation in the recent events." Kadar's program even included negotiations for the withdrawal of Soviet troops - whose assistance he said the "Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant government" had requested to smash the reactionary forces and restore order - as soon as this had been achieved.

62. On paper at any rate, the only important differences between the Nagy and the Kadar programs was the omission in the latter of free elections and of neutrality, but this made all the difference between a free democracy and a Russian-Communist dictatorship.

63. Inasmuch as, according to the Hungarian Constitution, the power to appoint or dismiss the premier rests, when Parliament is not in session, with the Presidential Council, it was certainly strange that the formation of the Kadar government was not preceded by an announcement that Nagy had resigned or been dismissed, and that it was Kadar himself who announced his assumption of the premiership without even a courtesy reference to the Presidential Council. This oversight was corrected by Istvan Dobi on 9 May 1957 in his speech to the National Assembly. He claimed that on November 4, 1956, the Presidential Council had "suspended the Nagy government," and went on to say that "on 3 November, Janos Kadar asked for the help of the Soviet troops, and on 4 November, as the constitutionally appointed premier of the country, began his wise and purposeful policy." It followed that he had asked for Soviet intervention before his appointment as premier.

64. Actually, apart from the - presumably tape recorded - Szolnok announcement, Kadar was first heard from on November 6, when he appealed for food, medicines, and construction materials. There was little for a civilian

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government to do for another week, since it was not until November 10 that the Russian forces had succeeded in virtually crushing the armed revolt, in Budapest as well as in the provinces, while sporadic fighting continued for many weeks. On November 11, Kadar declared over the radio that negotiations for the withdrawal of Russian troops could start only after order had been restored, explaining that those who demanded an earlier withdrawal voted "willy-nilly for the counter-revolution, for the imperialist yoke . . . "

65. Kadar was of course perfectly right, for his government, having no organized forces at its disposal, either would have been forced to accept the demands of the "counter-revolutionaries" or would have been swept away, without the protection of the Russian troops. It took time to rebuild the security organization, now called "R" group, to replace the AVH abolished by Nagy on October 28, and which even Kadar did not dare revive in its old shape, and to reorganize the army which had disintegrated. Only some 20% of the officer corps are estimated to have signed the declaration of loyalty demanded of those desiring to remain in the reorganized army.

Kadar and the Workers' Councils

66. Armed forces, foreign or native, were also indispensable to the government in its attempt to terrorize the population into submission by arrests and deportations, for the crushing of large scale armed resistance proved to be only part of the job. Revolutionary Councils and Workers' Councils had no intention of disbanding; rather they were resolved to use to the utmost the powerful leverage provided by the strike weapon. Their demands were practically the same as those formulated by the students on October 23: immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops; free elections under UN supervision; a new coalition gov-

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ernment in which none of the members of the Kadar government were to be included but in which Nagy should participate; withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact; neutrality; liberation of participants in the uprising; recognition of the right to strike; re-examination of commercial agreements; and a ban on Party organizing within factories. Pending satisfaction of these demands, the general strike continued despite government appeals supported by the threats and arrests mainly carried out by the Russian forces.

67. The Greater Budapest Workers' Council, formed on November 14, had a number of meetings with Kadar. As was to be expected, Kadar tried to equivocate on most points. However, he declared himself ready to recognize the workers' councils of individual factories and promised that no one was to be penalized for his participation in the uprising. He held out the prospect of a multi-party system and honest elections; of negotiations with Nagy if he returned from his asylum in the Yugoslav Embassy to Hungarian soil; and of publication of future trade agreements. As for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, he reiterated his contention that the counter-revolution had to be broken first, but promised to start negotiations for that purpose as well as for the declaration of Hungarian neutrality, provided the workers' councils used their influence to terminate the strike.

68. After the November 17 meeting, the workers' councils decided that Kadar's attitude seemed sufficiently conciliatory to warrant calling off the strike as of November 19, but reserved the right to stop work once more should he not keep his promises. This seemed a wise precaution, in view of Kadar's refusal to put his promises in writing, claiming that his word was enough. Its real worth was proved on November 21, when the government banned a meeting of the Greater Budapest Workers' Council, called to discuss the law issued that day which confined the com-

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petence of workers' councils to economic matters and which the workers deemed unsatisfactory.<sup>1</sup> A 48-hour protest strike was called, as a result of which Kadar promised a revision of the most objectionable provisions and declared the government's readiness to recognize the Greater Budapest Workers' Council as a consultative body whose recommendations would receive careful consideration. Although the strike was called off, the Council continued to insist on the implementation of the October 23 program. By November 25, Kadar had realized that further tergiversation was impossible - and also unnecessary after Nagy's kidnapping by the Soviet forces. He now took the line in his conference with the Council's delegates that the Nagy government had been a camouflage for counter-revolutionaries; that only when the People's Democratic State had been strengthened and the last vestiges of the counter-revolution stamped out would he start negotiations for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, and that only then would he be ready to include non-Communists in the government. For the moment, the first task of the government was to crush the remnants of the counter-revolution.

69. Accordingly, a number of leaders of the workers' councils were arrested, meetings were dispersed by the police and Russian forces, and the Revolutionary Councils were abolished. (December 8, 1956). When the Greater Budapest Workers' Council the next day called another 48-hour strike "in protest against the repression of workers and their chosen representatives," the Government countered by declaring all workers' councils above the factory level illegal and by issuing decrees empowering courts of

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<sup>1</sup> Although the workers' councils competence included the "management of factories, mines and workshops . . . "

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summary justice to pronounce death sentences on anyone guilty of acts of violence or of possessing arms, and authorizing detention by the police for six months of anyone hindering the resumption of work.

70. On January 5, 1957, Kadar issued a declaration dealing, among other questions, with workers' councils. Although nominally allowed to function, they were deprived of all real authority which was once again concentrated in the hands of the government appointed factory directors. Workers' councils were reduced to a purely ancillary role. They were to help the authorities and trade unions to "elaborate the wage and bonus system . . . and see that workers adhere strictly to government resolutions."

71. Thereupon many workers' councils resigned, deeming, as the Csepel Council expressed it, that they were left with "no other role but to carry out orders of the government . . . that are against our convictions . . . " But their disappearance produced no improvement in the government-worker relationship. Violent disturbances broke out in the Csepel Works on January 11, to which the government reacted by a law, promulgated on the 15th, increasing the "inadequate" powers of the courts of summary jurisdiction, inter alia by including in the crimes punishable by death the act of "intentionally disturbing the functioning of factories [of public interest]"<sup>1</sup> by exciting others to strike. "

72. The workers' councils were foredoomed to complete emasculation as soon as the Communists managed to reconstitute their shattered party, there being no room for them in the Moscow concept of Marxism. The workers

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<sup>1</sup> All factories employing over 100 workers.

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realized the incompatibility of workers' and Party interests so well that one of their chief demands during the Revolution had been a ban on all Party organizations in factories. Kadar naturally rejected this "clearly counter-revolutionary objective." Little by little, as Party membership grew - to 103, 000 by the end of December 1956 - Party cells were reconstituted in the factories and at the same time efforts were in progress to carry out the Party's December 8 Resolution to take over the workers' councils and cleanse them of "demagogues."

73. It may be pointed out that in the days immediately following the Revolution, Sandor Gaspar, secretary-general of the National Council of Free Trade Unions, had declared they were "for the freedom of trade unions and their independence from the government and political parties,"<sup>1</sup> and on 24 November 1956, Nepakarat, the Trade Union organ, went so far as to write: "We want the workers' councils to be the masters of the enterprises in actual practice," the trade unions performing the necessary task of controlling the "owner of the enterprise, even if it be the workers themselves," i.e. the state.

74. But by the end of November, the tune had changed. Nepakarat declared then that the trade unions should be independent of both Party and government and that workers should have the right to strike.

The Reconstruction of the Party and Government Machinery

75. In the political field, Kadar played a similar game in order to gain time to consolidate his authority with the help of the security police force, the camouflaged AVH,

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<sup>1</sup>Daily Worker, November 15, 1956.

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reconstituted in January 1957, and of a reconstructed Communist Party. In the course of his discussions with the Greater Budapest Workers' Council on November 15, 1956, Kadar had conceded that the composition of his government was not final and should be broadened, and even declared himself willing to negotiate with Nagy, provided he left the Yugoslav Embassy. On December 1 Istvan Dobi said in a broadcast speech that the government "would be enlarged by giving place to the leaders of the former democratic parties who agree with the principles of socialism," and on December 8, 1956, the non-Communist parties set forth in a ten-point memorandum the terms on which they were willing to collaborate. But the same day the Communist Party adopted a resolution which amounted to a refusal to share power with any other party, although it might have seemed that the non-Communist parties had gone to the limit of concessions to satisfy Kadar's condition that they pledge themselves "to defend the socialist achievements" of the country. They had agreed that the Communist Party must play an important role, as was "necessary for the political life of the country," and that public ownership of the means of production must be preserved, the mines, factories, banks and other enterprises owned by the state on October 23 remaining in its possession. Private ownership of land was to be limited to what a family could cultivate, and voluntary joining of cooperatives was permitted. On the other hand, a limited freedom of private enterprise was to be allowed and forced deliveries of produce were to be abolished. The autonomy of workers' councils entitled to participate in management, the independence of trade unions, and the right to strike were to be recognized. The death penalty was to be abolished. A new electoral law was also demanded, but political parties seeking the overthrow of the political, economic, and social order should not be tolerated.

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76. The December 8 memorandum reaffirmed the desire to enjoy the confidence and support of the USSR, which, it claimed, had been misled as to the aims of the revolution by former Hungarian leaders. It proposed negotiations on problems such as the Warsaw Pact and the withdrawal of Russian troops, with the understanding that Hungary was prepared to give guarantees that its territory would not be used as a base by countries hostile to the USSR.

77. The memorandum also listed as one of the objectives of the non-Communist parties the protection of "the freedom and independence of the country." This, together with the demand for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and the failure to mention outright the dictatorship of the proletariat, was undoubtedly sufficient to ensure Moscow's disapproval, and that settled the matter. Besides, as the amount of power Kadar and the Communist Party would have been able to exercise in post-revolutionary Hungary in the absence of Russian troops was quite problematical, it is safe to assume that they were in entire agreement with the Soviet point of view.

78. If, as late as 9 February 1957, Kadar was still talking of broadening the government, this could only have been done with the intent to deceive the remaining optimists. The government "Declaration" of January 6, 1957, issued after long talks with Khrushchev and Malenkov, besides now describing Nagy as a traitor, had stated clearly enough that Hungary remained a proletarian dictatorship. On the other hand, the "Declaration" held out some alluring prospects; it promised a "deepening and broadening of democratism" which would never again "allow the anti-Leninist methods of leadership of the Rakosi-Gerö clique, the personality cult, and the ignoring of the interests of the masses to return to public life." It also promised to maintain the recent wage increases and the workers' councils, to abolish farm produce collection and other burdens on the peasants,

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as well as special taxes on small craftsmen and trades. The powers of the National Assembly and other elected organs were to be increased, and both the powers and the number of officials reduced. Legality and the protection of citizens' rights were to be consolidated. Investments in industry were to be reduced, and a new economic plan was to be drawn up with the main objective of raising living standards. Independent craftsmen were to be encouraged. Farm collectivization would be entirely voluntary, simple associations would be encouraged, and the selling and buying of land would be permitted. The scope of private trade in certain fields was to be widened; and the management of industry was to be decentralized. Religious instruction in schools was to be permitted on an optional basis and all disputed problems were to be settled by agreement between church and state. As for Hungarian relations with the USSR, the Declaration expressed the intention to settle all questions, "including questions in connection with the Soviet forces in Hungary, " on the basis of the well known five principles, which included "respect for equality, sovereignty, and national independence, " but also of "proletarian internationalism. " The intervention of Soviet troops was justified on the ground that they had defended "the Hungarian people against a possible military attack from external imperialist forces. " There was no mention of the pledge to obtain the withdrawal of Soviet troops.<sup>1</sup>

79. Except for the emphasis on proletarian internationalism and the defense of Russian military intervention, Kadar's avowed program was not very different from Gomulka's. However, these points made all the difference. Moreover, whereas the Poles believed in Gomulka's sincer-

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<sup>1</sup> The last time it had been mentioned "officially" had been in Nepszabadsag of November 18, 1956.

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ity, nobody in Hungary trusted Kadar after his first month in power, nor was the reconstitution, two days after publication of the Declaration, of the secret police likely to endear his regime to the Hungarian people. The reaction of the workers was violent, as mentioned above, and was countered by the government on 12 January 1957 with a sweeping extension of martial law, making death the normal penalty for "anti-state activities," and with a reassertion of the ban on public meetings. As Minister of State Marosan announced on the 14th, the government intended to be "merciless" in its fight against all its enemies. On January 17, the revolutionary leader Josef Dudas was executed, and the Writers Union, which had played such an effective part in fomenting the Revolution, was "temporarily" suspended. The same fate overtook the Journalists Union a few days later, and on January 25, a number of prominent intellectuals, among them Hay, Zelk, and Tardos, were arrested.

80. In the meantime, the Kadar regime was of course entirely dependent on financial help from the Bloc. The USSR granted a rehabilitation loan of \$50,000,000 on December 30, 1956 (later increased to \$250,000,000). Peiping followed suit with a like amount, and the other satellites contributed smaller amounts in cash and kind.

81. By February, 1957, the Kadar regime had been able to convince itself that it could never hope to gain popular acceptance on the basis of its actual policy (if it had ever labored under that illusion) and that the little credit it had enjoyed on the strength of its promises of concessions was virtually exhausted. On the other hand, hunger and police terrorism - and the Russian army - could be safely counted upon to revive production and maintain order. A decree creating workers' guards to assist the armed forces was issued on February 18. On the 16th, Deputy Premier Münnich had called for greater severity

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against "the enemy" on the part of the summary courts, with the result that Radio Budapest could announce on March 13 that 40 death sentences had been recorded. The press was again tightly muzzled. The students returning to the universities, reopened on February 4, were warned that violations of discipline might bring about the closing of the schools, and the promise to allow voluntary religious instruction was all but withdrawn.

#### Party Problems

82. At the same time strenuous efforts to build the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (MSZMP) continued. At a meeting of its provisional Central Committee on February 26, it was announced that membership was increasing at a rate of 8,000-12,000 a week and had reached 190,000, that is almost double the late December figure, and the deadline of May 1 was set for readmission of former members of the old Workers Party with full seniority rights. Membership of the Central Committee was increased to 37 and that of the Politburo to 10. Its members were Antal Apro, Bela Biszku, Lajos Feher, Janos Kadar, Gyula Kallai, Karoly Kiss, Gyorgy Marosan, Ferenc Munnich, Sandor Ronai, and Miklos Somogyi.

83. The defunct youth union, DISZ, was revived on the same day, February 26, 1957, in the guise of a youth league, KISZ; this was soon confronted with the dilemma: which was better, to adopt an ambiguous non-Communist program and veil its aims to attract members, or to be frank about them, and be content with a small membership? By April, the Party had chosen the latter alternative, as foreshadowed in a Nepszabadsag article which declared that the paramount task of KISZ was to educate true Communists who would remain loyal in all circumstances. The explanation was supplied by Kadar in his

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May 11, 1957, speech to the National Assembly: the young people in the recent past had seen "some contradictions" between the "big words and superlatives" used about socialism in its present embryonic stage and the reality. "It is shattering for youth to suffer emotional disappointment, and some young people got into a situation where they had to suffer such disillusionment . . . and they suffered a shock . . . The abnormal thing is what we have experienced in the recent past: that among the children of the working class those who were most hesitant [sic] were gained by the counter-revolution and fascism for its side, for its ideas." In Hungary, unjustified "big words and superlatives" were apparently to be reserved in future for adults, who could better stand the shock of disillusionment.

84. Regime policy toward the peasants combined a series of measures intended to encourage production with a drive to reconstitute the disbanded collectives. The government found it wiser to allow the free marketing of farm produce to continue<sup>1</sup> and to issue a decree providing for compensation of damage suffered by peasants as a result of earlier collectivization drives. But on the other hand Nepszabadsag announced on March 2, 1957, that the number of collective farms, which had dropped from 3,954 to 1,599 after the Revolution, had again risen to 2,439, a growth which could hardly be explained by a spontaneous change of mind of the members. But even then, the membership was only one-third of the March 1956 figure.

85. Despite these measures, the Kadar regime was still being far too lenient towards revisionism to suit the Stalinists. In a long article appearing in Nepszabadsag of March 7, 1957, Jozsef Revai, the leading Party theore-

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<sup>1</sup>Radio Budapest, February 24.

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tician of the Rakosi era, strongly criticized the present leadership for its failure to enforce "ideological purity" in Party ranks, demanded that much more attention should be paid to the exposure of the "revisionist and anti-Communist character of the battle against Stalinism" and that the "distorted slogan Rakosism" should be dropped. "The anti-Communist forces," Revai explained, had for a long time been "in the pleasant situation of being able to hide their anti-Communism behind a slogan accepted by the Party." To prevent this, Revai demanded that the accent be put on exposing the grave "revisionist" crimes of Nagy and his followers rather than on the venial sins of Rakosi and Gerö, which - like those of Stalin - were far outweighed by their achievements.

86. The reaction of Party spokesmen was general agreement with Revai's condemnation of Nagy's revisionism, but strong disagreement with the attempted exoneration of Rakosi. Nevertheless, the article, only slightly abridged, was published by Pravda on March 18, and as publication without criticism meant approval, it appeared that the Kremlin tacitly agreed it had dealt too severely with Rakosi and implicitly favored even more Stalinist methods than those applied hitherto by Kadar. From then on the support of the left wing was thrown to the Kadar "moderates," who had, it is true, badly needed reinforcement! One result of the episode was a rush to join the MSZMP which acquired 118,000 new members in April, but opinions differ with regard to the interpretation of the phenomenon. Some explained it as an influx of Stalinists; others maintained that most of the new members were secret Nagyists who had adopted the tactic of infiltrating the Party to counteract Kadar's alliance with the left.

87. Color was lent to the belief that Revai's article presaged a tightening of the screw by a series of decrees

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which appeared in March: on the 19th, a decree reinstituting "legal" deportations; on the 23rd, a decree making it mandatory to revalidate identity cards, and a decree establishing state control over ecclesiastical appointments and warning against abuse of the right of religious instruction for political purpose.

88. Hungary's economic dependence on the USSR was underlined by Kadar's visit to Moscow, which produced a joint communiqué (March 28) confirming the granting of loans and credits totalling over one billion rubles and the cancellation or deferment of earlier debts of more than \$100,000,000.<sup>1</sup> Part of the credit was to cover 650,000 tons of grain, 1.2 million tons of coal, 1.2 million tons of iron ore, and other indispensable raw materials and consumers' goods. Cooperation in the field of nuclear energy was reaffirmed, but the early promise to publish the terms of the agreement on the exploitation of uranium ore was not kept. Neither was Kadar's promise to negotiate the withdrawal of Soviet troops, but that was hardly unexpected.

89. By April, the Kadar regime felt that it was sufficiently strong and the people sufficiently terrorized and discouraged to cancel the curfew (April 13), to allow Hammarskjöld to visit Hungary - six months after the UN request - and to hold mass meetings with political speeches. The National Assembly met in early May. Its first action was the extension of its mandate for two more years in order not to "distract attention from the more important task of

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<sup>1</sup> In April, it was announced that the USSR would pay Hungary a further \$20-22.5 million, as a result of the recalculation of non-commercial payment balances since 1950 - another confirmation of Soviet exploitation of the satellite economies.

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reconstruction" by new elections. On May 9, Kadar told the National Assembly: "The bringing into being of several political parties is not a prerequisite of building socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat . . . the multi-party system cannot be applied as a system of government, " - in case anybody still had illusions on the subject. Two days later, he revealed that in his opinion "the task of the leaders is not to put into effect the wishes and the will of the masses . . . It is to realize the interest of the masses."

90. Although Kadar did not mention Revai, he clearly subscribed to his main thesis. Kadar's speech showed that he, too, now considered Nagy's "treason" much more serious than Rakosi's "faults." At the same time, a number of second string Rakosists who had dropped from view after the Revolution, were elected to various committees of the National Assembly and to the Presidium. Antal Apro was reappointed deputy premier, the post he had held under Rakosi and Gerö.

#### Economic Reconstruction

91. The short-term economic situation improved considerably in the spring of 1957, more rapidly than had been generally expected, and the pre-Revolution standard was practically recovered. However, as the Economic Commission for Europe pointed out, the recovery was achieved "at the expense of the rapid diffusion of accumulated stocks and of the mortgaging of future export receipts and living standards through the incurring of a heavy foreign debt."<sup>1</sup> ECE held that the sharp cutback in investment - reduced to about 65% of the 1956 and only about 1/3 of the pre-1953 figure - and the sudden change in its pattern

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<sup>1</sup>The New York Times, July 11, 1957.

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(from an emphasis on heavy industry to consumer goods and housing) "must be both immediately wasteful of resources and detrimental in the long run to prospects for expansion." A puzzling feature of the investment plan was the sharp reduction in the sum to be invested in agriculture - unless it is to be explained, partly at least, by second thoughts with regard to the concessions made to the peasantry. For in April, a land tax, to be paid in grain, had been imposed on all holdings exceeding 2 hectares, and on June 23, the buying of wheat, at a fixed price, was made a government monopoly.

92. Kadar's promise to negotiate the withdrawal of Soviet troops was finally implemented on May 27, to the extent of concluding a status of forces agreement, which described the stationing of Soviet troops on Hungary's soil as "temporary." In the meantime, Hungarians were assured that the presence of Soviet forces did not "affect Hungary's sovereignty" and that they would not interfere in internal affairs.

#### The June 1957 Party Conference

93. The Hungarian Socialist Workers Party's first national conference, held from June 27-29, 1957, attempted to strengthen the claim of the regime that it represented a moderate, middle of the road, line. The final resolution did indeed contain a passage stating that it was "very important that we should not allow the Party to stray from the right road either to the left or to the right." It mentioned "past injustices," dogmatism, and "divorce from the masses causing great damage to the life of the Party" on the part of the Rakosi-Gerð leadership, for which the recommended antidote was better Party training and the reintroduction of compulsory courses on Marxism-Leninism in high schools and universities - but the themes of revision-

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ism, counter-revolutionary crimes, and treachery were repeated ad nauseam. For these aberrations, the prescribed remedies were "merciless punishment of those who committed crimes and who even today are engaged in an active fight against the people's power."

94. The Party Conference coolly repudiated its original platform, the resolutions adopted on November 4, 1956, by its first executive committee, as "contrary to Marxism-Leninism" and declared itself fully satisfied with the Party's present membership and composition: 345,733 members<sup>1</sup> - 40.2% of the former MDP membership - of whom 60% were said to be workers, 17% peasants, 7% intellectuals, and 10% employees. The reduced membership made it all the more imperative for the party, the resolution stated, "to win the masses" by means of contacts established through the mass organizations, that is the trade unions, with their 2 million members, the Communist Youth League, the local councils, and the Patriotic People's Front. The resolution again declared the demand for a multi-party system to be reactionary and therefore unacceptable, and - quite unperturbed by its simultaneous admission that the broad masses had still to be won over and even to be made to understand the Party's policy and views - it asserted that the "people's democratic state . . . exercises the dictatorship of the overwhelming majority of the people . . ." The people's democratic state was described with the same aplomb as "the embodiment of one single social class, the working class," which, however, "draws into the exercise of power its ally, the peasantry. It is thus that the workers' power has assumed the character of people's power."

95. With regard to industry, the Party resolution

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<sup>1</sup>85% of whom had been members of the old MDP.

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affirmed the need to continue "the process of socialist industrialization - and within this, the development of heavy industry to the extent necessary in our country, " taking into account "experiences gained in previous years." With regard to agriculture, the resolution impartially approved the advantages granted individual peasants, admitting that this was "more than an economic problem, it is a very important problem for the further development of the worker-peasant alliance, " but also stated frankly that "modern large-scale agriculture is the only path leading to flourishing agriculture" and that the state would "help to solve the problem by all means at its disposal. " The problem of workers' councils remained "to be settled in the future, " but, in the meantime, the resolution made it clear that the "widening of democracy in the factories and the future of the workers councils must be based on the further consolidation of the trade unions' role. . . . "

96. In the cultural field, the Resolution promised "an attack against the encroachments of the counter-revolution, " relying on the "ranks of the intellectuals who are loyal to our system, " and in educational work, a continuation of the "struggle to enforce discipline and to eliminate clericalism and nationalism apparent in the ranks of youth, " coupled with "greater attention to the political aspects of students. " For the success of the necessary "multi-lateral and high-level ideological struggle against the petit-bourgeois and counter-revolutionary trends which are still very powerful in ideological domains, " the resolution counted on the Party's effective "guidance and supervision" which it expected to achieve by intensifying "the struggle for the purity of Marxist-Leninist teachings. " Presumably, the Party attributed its earlier failure in this field solely to the "harmful phenomena of the personality cult and dogmatism. "

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97. The conflict between advocates of the Yugoslav economic system which permitted the "law of values" to operate within certain limits and was described by Neps - zabadsag (June 24, 1957) as "revisionism under the cover of a new economic mechanism," and the advocates of rigid planning was solved by a compromise. The resolution, as was to be expected after the decentralization of Soviet industry, rejected the "incorrect views which deny the need for central guidance and control," but deemed it necessary "that superior economic and state organs grant a larger sphere of competence to the lower organs."

Intensification of Intimidation after June Purge in Moscow

98. The election of several former high-level Rakosists, including Jozsef Revai, to the Central Committee may well have exceeded Kadar's ideas of the proper limits of collaboration with that group. For in his opening speech on June 27, Kadar had reaffirmed that "certain members of the old Party leadership who are known to have had a part in the sectarian and dogmatic mistakes are not in the leadership of the Party today because the Party leadership took the view that there should be no persons or groups in the present leadership who are guilty of the old mistakes, and who, if given a leading position, would perhaps pull the Party toward sectarianism." After this statement, the election of men like Revai to the Central Committee could not but appear as a rebuff to Kadar, but the tables were soon turned by the announcement on July 3 of the Moscow purge of "dogmatists," which seemed at first sight to vindicate Kadar's position and to foreshadow a "softer" line. Rumors that Nagy was to be rehabilitated were current. These mistaken assumptions produced a "dangerous spirit" in the population, and a new wave of repression started in mid-July. Marosan, speaking on September 23 at the Budapest Technical University, referred to the 1,200 people the government was said to have arrested in July, and

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without disputing or confirming the figure - set at a minimum of 6,000 by other sources - explained that the government might have arrested these people any time between January and April, but having reestablished its authority, it had preferred to show leniency. However, "after the CPSU June Resolution, all at once it began: we shall start again. Well then, so it should be impossible to start again, some people were jailed."

99. Further proof that the Moscow purge had not been motivated by anti-Stalinism was supplied by Khrushchev when he declared on July 15, in the course of his visit to Czechoslovakia, his full approval of Kadar, with whom he had just conferred: "Kadar will bring order. He knows what to do."

100. If Kadar is judged by his deeds rather than his words, it is difficult to see what more the avowed Stalinists such as Revai could have demanded of him, unless it be the worst police excesses of the Stalin era. With the exception of the farm sector, where economic necessity precluded the immediate resumption of pressure for collectivization, restriction of personal and political liberties and repression against individuals had kept pace with the gradual reconstitution of the Party and the even more important physical means of control. "The counter-revolution," Kadar had declared on June 27, "has no power in the country. We have reorganized our state organs and armed forces; we have organized the workers' guards."

101. It is true that in the same breath Kadar contradicted himself, saying that "the victory must still be secured, because a significant proportion of the forces of the enemy is still intact," but he had to say that to justify his warning against any blunting of "vigilance against the enemy" as a result of the complacency he discerned in the

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Party. Apparently, there were those in the Party who thought that, quite apart from the early assurances given by Kadar not to punish participants in the counter-revolution who had committed no crimes, enough people had been sentenced to death and to prison to satisfy both the need for deterrence and Soviet thirst for vengeance. Even "quite a fair number of judges" had had enough of it and were asking "to be transferred from the criminal court,"<sup>1</sup> according to Mrs. Imre Juhacz, a member of Parliament. On June 15, Magyar Kozlony had announced a return to the pre-1953 system of People's courts composed of one professional and two lay judges, who might not pass sentences of less than five years, and could even hand down death sentences in cases of attempted or actual strikes.

102. No reliable figures are available, but some 1, 800 indictments for counter-revolutionary activities were reported in the Hungarian press up to the middle of June, 1957. They revealed that contrary to the official claim that the counter-revolution had been the work of former landowners, capitalists, and Horthy officers, the principal victims of the repression were workers, small craftsmen and peasants. Among the indictments reported was one against a number of inhabitants of the village of Lenti in Western Hungary (2, 370 inhabitants), accused of having taken part in the counter-revolution.<sup>2</sup> Particularly remarkable is the fact that many of the villagers were former servants and farmhands on adjoining "feudal" estates. Sentences reported in the press include 2 years for giving food and medicine to strikers, 2-1/2 years for defacing May 1 placards, 13 years for having wished for

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<sup>1</sup> Nepszabadsag, June 4, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Zalai Hirlap, April 20, 1957.

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the death of a police officer, 7 years for destruction of a Soviet monument, 12 years for agitation against the Kadar government, etc.

103. Some 50 writers and journalists were known to be in prison as of July 1957, and 7 had been sentenced. The fact that the trials following upon the July wave of arrests were given little publicity puzzled many observers, but can be explained by the aim of forestalling any new manifestations of opposition to the regime on the eve of the UN debate in September on the Special Committee's report without supplying undesirable evidence of its unpopularity. The grapevine could be relied on to give the news adequate internal dissemination.

104. The attempts to satisfy the imperative need to increase lagging production in all fields of the economy produced a remarkable example of Leninist flexibility: in industry, a government-trade union resolution of August 3, 1957, restored the socialist labor competitions; a decree published on July 21 had reintroduced the even more unpopular wage norm system which, Radio Budapest admitted (August 3), would result in reducing pay in many factories. Throughout Hungarian heavy industry, most workers had not had a day off in three months, and frequently got no pay for Sunday work, the trade union paper Nepakarat revealed (September 15). In contrast thereto, according to the Economic Commission for Europe, prices paid for agricultural products sold to the government were three times as high as those paid in 1956 under compulsory delivery.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the peasants who had left collectives were once again assured that they would not be molested, compensation was promised to peasants who had suffered as a result of land commassation.

<sup>1</sup> The New York Times, October 23, 1957.

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105. In spite of the lesson of the Moscow purge, a new illusion that the July wave of arrests had been a last flash in the pan and that government policy would be considerably softened in order to take the edge off the forthcoming UN debates, gained ground during the summer, in Hungary as well as abroad. The circumstance that, notwithstanding, Nagy was not being brought to trial, was even interpreted by many as an indication that he was slated by Moscow to replace Kadar. How unjustified those illusions were was proved by Kadar's speech of August 20 at Kisujszallas, in which he reaffirmed the regime's determination to continue and if necessary to extend its policy toward "class enemies" in the future, if attempts to "undermine the regime" continued. His conciliatory words were reserved for the peasants. He praised their allegedly correct attitude during the counter-revolution and assured them once again that the compulsory delivery system would not be revived.

The Problem of the Intellectuals

106. How to deal with the intellectuals was a problem on which the Party leaders seemed unable to agree. On August 4, 1957, Nepszabadsag carried an article by Gyula Kallai, Minister of Culture, in which he recognized that, besides a small group of outright enemies of socialism, the "overwhelming majority" of the intelligentsia had been confused and misled by earlier faults of the party and by socialist and nationalist demagoguery, but declared they should be won back by persuasion. Three days later, however, Gyaros, the Foreign Officer spokesman, would concede only that there were "some" writers who had not yet exercised self-criticism, with whom, however, negotiations were underway. Revisionism, Gyaros said, had increased after the Soviet purge in June, and the Party

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was determined not to make the slightest concession to its adherents. If the writers refused to recognize their faults, they would not be allowed to publish. Faced with the threat of starvation, and presumably with other unpleasant prospects, the majority of Hungarian writers were forced to capitulate. On September 5, the press carried a declaration signed by several hundred writers endorsing the government's attitude toward UN "interference" in Hungarian affairs. Istvan Dobi, in a speech published on September 17, gloated over this success and denied that any force had been used, but he failed to explain by what miracle the conversion of so many writers could have been achieved in the period of one month which had elapsed since Kallai's article. The omission was, however, made good by Nepszabadsag of September 30, which explained that the change of heart had been "forced" by public opinion. In unofficial Hungarian circles a different explanation was offered: that the statement was the result of a deal, the quid pro quo being leniency towards prominent intellectuals under detention, such as Zelk, Dery, Hay and Tardos. Whatever the correct explanation may be, Kallai writing in Nepszabadsag of October 6, was still arguing that the intellectuals who were "confused by the events but committed no crimes . . . can and must be won over to the people's democracy . . . The new methods in political and ideological education are patience and friendly criticism . . . not administrative pressure."

107. The great problem, of course, was to get the writers not only to write, but to write Communist propaganda, and this problem has not been solved. The literary magazine Kortars wrote in its January 1958 issue: "escapism from contemporary reality is a universal feature of Hungarian literature now . . . Many works being written at present radiate a strong emotional charge of pessimism and mistrust in the Hungarian road of building socialism."

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Relations between the Churches and the State

108. If relations between the government and the Catholic Church are, for the time being, outwardly correct, it is probably chiefly due to the personal attitude of Archbishop Grösz, head of the Catholic Bench of Bishops in Cardinal Mindszenty's absence, an attitude which, however, appears to be tolerated only reluctantly by the Vatican. The government's offer to refrain from putting into effect the planned reduction of clerics' salaries was followed very shortly (August 30, 1957) by the issuance of an expression of support for the government's position with regard to the UN Special Commission, by the Catholic Bench of Bishops as well as by the heads of the Protestant churches.

109. The Vatican did not openly disavow Archbishop Grösz's action, but the publication on September 6 of a decree enjoining Hungarian priests, under penalty of excommunication, from accepting parliamentary mandates, was hardly a coincidence. The government retaliated by calling on Catholics to ignore the Vatican's decree, yet on December 7, Archbishop Grösz accepted a decoration for his work in improving church-state relations and stated that they were "at present entirely satisfactory," adding that "for us best to discharge our patriotic duties, it is proper that we should remain in our appropriate field, professing Christ's gospel and doing our best to educate good citizens for the Hungarian People's Republic." He also accepted membership in the PPF Council. Archbishop Grösz would appear, therefore, to be going further than Cardinal Wysinski in his interpretation of what the Church should "render unto Caesar."

110. So far the Vatican has been content to state unofficially that the Hungarian regime appears to be using

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Archbishop Grösz for its own ends, but that he is not authorized to act for Cardinal Mindszenty, who remains the official head of the Hungarian Catholic Church. Officially, L'Osservatore Romano has asserted that the Catholic priests of Hungary have been forced to adhere to the peace movement, according to Nepszabadsag of February 7, 1958. The latter naturally denied the charge.

111. On the other hand, the government does not appear to be interfering with religious services, and even more important, with the religious instruction of children, for the Catholic publication Uj Ember of September 19, 1957, reported a 17% increase in attendance.

112. A similar situation has developed in the relations between the government and the Lutheran church. The Lutherans, following the lead of Bishops Ordass and Thuroczy, had for a long time refused to reinstate several "progressive" churchmen ousted during the Revolution, Bishop Veto among them. But on December 13, 1957, the government imposed reinstatement, and in a letter replying to an intervention of three Scandinavian bishops on behalf of Bishops Ordass and Thuroczy, the Hungarian office for Religious Affairs explained that "these leaders had reached a point where they became opposed to the Church itself, to the majority of pastors and the mass of believers. . . . Bishop Thuroczy has gone into retirement. He is at his former place of residence and draws a pension from the state. During the last few weeks the situation has considerably improved and become normal. This is also evidenced by the fact that the state has granted special aid to supplement the agreed subsidies to the Lutheran pastors."<sup>1</sup> The letter failed to supply any information concerning the fate of Bishop Ordass.

<sup>1</sup> Radio Budapest, February 12, 1958.

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The Economic Picture at the End of 1957

113. Facts and statements in the economic field are hard to reconcile. In spite of the loss of a considerable number of able-bodied men and women who fled after the Revolution, and of a 14% lower per capita output than in 1956, total industrial production by September 1957 was claimed by the Central Statistical Office to have exceeded that of the first nine months of 1956 by 8%.<sup>1</sup> Istvan Friss, Chairman of the Economic Council, claimed that average wages were 18% higher than in August 1956,<sup>2</sup> but he failed to mention that the wage increases were largely due to unauthorized decisions of plant managers in the period immediately following the Revolution, that wages had been steadily dropping since the high point reached in January 1957, and that the prices of many consumer goods, although not of food, had risen substantially. In spite of this, the Minister of Internal Trade reported to the National Assembly that "the sale of industrial articles greatly increased, but that of foodstuffs did not exceed last year's level."<sup>3</sup> The general situation as of September 1957 was described by the Finance Minister as one of "high production costs, unjustifiably high wages, abuses, and concealed price increases . . . Enterprises improve their production results . . . by lowering quality standards at the expense of the consumer. Investment is not satisfactory either . . . We must establish a correct foreign trade balance. The export plan this year was only 75% of that for 1955. Imports, however, are higher by 33%. The main task for the next few years is to balance our international payments and receipts

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<sup>1</sup>Radio Budapest, October 18, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Radio Budapest, October 2, 1957

<sup>3</sup>Radio Budapest, October 21, 1957

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and to create the necessary conditions by 1961 for starting repayment of loans."<sup>1</sup>

114. That this would not be an easy task can be inferred from the fact that on December 25, 1957, Apro announced the borrowing of another 300 million rubles and from the further statement by Friss that the population consumed approximately 95% of the national income, leaving very little for investment and accumulation.<sup>2</sup> The remedy he recommended was to put an end to the considerable waste in economic life. The people's income - presumably wages - could not be increased until the national income was increased, he said, pointing out the need for the participation of workers in the management of enterprises. But that this was not to be effected by means of the workers' councils, Kadar's promises notwithstanding, was made clear by Antal Apro. "The workers' councils," he said, "which were hastily formed at the end of last year and at the beginning of this year have died of what can only be regarded as a natural death . . . Unfortunately they were not formed for the purpose of exercising control over planning and production, but in order to strengthen the position of the anti-socialist elements in the factories!"<sup>3</sup>

115. The new formula to ensure greater worker "participation" - that is, higher output - was spelled out

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<sup>1</sup>Radio Budapest, September 26, 1957

<sup>2</sup>The Central Statistical office went even further asserting that "this year we shall consume as much as we produce, and we have even incurred debts to meet our consumption." Radio Budapest, November 27, 1957.

<sup>3</sup>Radio Budapest, October 10, 1957.

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in a decree law providing for "the abolition of workers' councils and for establishing factory councils under the direction of the trade unions" - <sup>1</sup> which makes an enumeration of their powers and duties superfluous. Only one-third of their membership are elected by the workers themselves.

116. By a remarkable coincidence, the two bright spots in the economy were the two capitalist sectors: agriculture and small private enterprises. For the peasants, freed from compulsory deliveries and, for the time being at least, from the threat of forcible collectivization and greatly helped by good weather, 1957 was a very good year. Prices paid to farmers were three times as high as in 1956 and total agricultural production was estimated at 6.3 million tons, 20% higher.<sup>2</sup> "The number of privately owned small-scale industrial and commercial enterprises operating under a trade license has grown and they enjoyed great prosperity during the year," Nepszabadsag reported on September 26. But, the paper continued, this was obviously an "unhealthy . . . spontaneous development" which would have to be curtailed by new economic laws in process of elaboration.

117. In January 1958, the Budapest Radio announced that the wings of private enterprise would be clipped by fixing prices, and on February 18, it forecast the passage of another law prohibiting workers from transferring from state to public enterprise and limiting the issuance of licenses to trades<sup>3</sup> for which the government had a surplus of raw materials.

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<sup>1</sup> Nepakarat, November 17, 1957

<sup>2</sup> Report of the U. N. Economic Commission for Europe. The New York Times, October 23, 1957.

<sup>3</sup> The New York Times, February 19, 1958.

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Worker and Youth Morale

118. In its report to the September 26 conference on youth problems, the Budapest MSZMP Party Committee drew a gloomy picture of the situation: "In spite of the fact that workers' wages were raised considerably in the past year, bad working discipline and dissatisfaction are rampant among the young workers." This was attributed by the Committee to the total disregard on the part of many factories of legal requirements with regard to hygienic and other conditions in places of work and in workers' lodgings. It was almost impossible for young married couples to get suitable lodgings, even if they were prepared to do most of the construction work themselves, because of lack of building materials. Conditions in student dormitories were equally bad, and managers of Houses of Culture frequently rented the rooms, leaving the young nowhere to go but the street. No wonder their morals were low. The Committee complained that the Party organizations failed to call for the assistance of KISZ, the activities of which as regards work outside the movement had "practically come to a standstill after the organizational period."<sup>2</sup> Theft and pilferage of "the people's property" had reached alarming proportions. The scapegoat, according to Dr. Götz, Chief of the Budapest Prosecutor's Office, was the counter-revolution. Its ideology was responsible for "the sad fact that damage to social property in Budapest during the first 7<sub>3</sub> months of the year was many times greater than last year."

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<sup>1</sup>Radio Budapest, October 2, 1957

<sup>2</sup>Membership in KISZ was given by Radio Budapest of 29 September 1957 as 200,000, that is roughly 10% of Hungarian youth.

<sup>3</sup>Radio Budapest, September 26, 1957

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119. Realizing that reeducation of those infected with the counter-revolutionary ideology might be too slow a process and that the prevalence of economic offenses might be partly at least due to the regime's almost exclusive concentration on political crimes, the National Assembly passed a law on December 21, 1957, providing for the creation of a Central Popular Control Committee and, under it, of regional and district committees, roughly paralleling the Ministry of State Control abolished in 1956. The committees had general investigating powers throughout all phases of the administration, and were expected, among other things, to help eliminate the false "solidarity which tolerated thieves and hooligans among workers." In the words of a deputy in the National Assembly, "what Hungary needed after the revolution was a control organ that would disclose not only common crimes, but also liberalism, irresponsibility, lack of discipline, and passivity seeking popularity."

120 The Supreme Public Prosecutor, Szenasi, made it clear, however, that the authorities had no intention to let their attention be diverted from political crimes by the campaign against economic misdeeds. He promised the National Assembly ruthless prosecution of "hostile elements." On the same occasion, he asserted that Rakosi's violations of socialist legality had been greatly exaggerated. It had been found, he said, that only 399 of the 3,012 political prisoners convicted before October 1956 were entitled to full rehabilitation, the others having been legally sentenced.

121. The President of the Supreme Court, Domakos, told the deputies that the number of criminal counter-revolutionary cases which had reached the Court up to November 1957 had been 1,717, of which 1,432 had been disposed of, but he failed to indicate the results. He had,

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he said, been handicapped by a shortage of judges, for more than half the Supreme Court judges had refused to serve on summary courts, and he had been obliged to dismiss them.

State and Party One Year after the Revolution

122. By the end of October 1957, the first anniversary of the Revolution, the regime had been able to boast, in the words of Istvan Dobi: "At present our state is very strong, our armed forces, our police, our frontier guards, and our workers' guards are strong, united, and in readiness"<sup>1</sup> - to which he could also truthfully have added the six Soviet divisions stationed in Hungary.

123. Dobi was, however, less truthful when he went on to claim that the peasantry, the working class, and the intelligentsia were loyal to the people's power. If that had been the case, he would hardly have needed to remind his audience that strong police forces and workers' guards were in readiness to suppress even the slightest attempt to commemorate the 23rd of October anniversary. Neither would the Party leaders, although professing complete satisfaction with the membership of the MSZMP, still have felt the need, after the abandonment of the multi-party government talk, to "broaden the base of the government." But they could think of nothing more novel than the Patriotic People's Front which was to be refurbished, in spite of the favor it had enjoyed during the premiership of the "traitor" Nagy, and of its negligible achievements. To remove any misunderstandings, Kadar explained on October 11, 1957, that the PPF was not "an organization of non-Communists which in the building of socialism collaborates with the Communists" but an organization of the Communists and non-party people cooperating with the Communists under the latter's direction. Otherwise, "he conceded, it might well become "a second party opposite the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, " which would of course be inadmissible.

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<sup>1</sup>  
Radio Budapest, October 20, 1957.

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124. At a meeting called on October 21, 1957, to revive the PPF after its long eclipse, Antal Apro, President of its National Council, explained that the "movement" was open to people who did not "adhere to Communist ideology and even to individuals who may entertain religious beliefs. All that is required is that one acknowledge that the building of socialism represents the only road that can lead the Hungarian people toward a happier future and that the building of socialism can be achieved under the leadership of the Party and the working class . . . We wish to create a PPF which, under the leadership of the Party and the working class, will mobilize the workers . . . and in which workers, peasants, and intellectuals will work together to build socialism. "

125. It had been decided, Apro announced, that the PPF would not be a mass organization, with membership cards, dues, etc., but a mass movement, with a "broad system of committees in villages, districts and towns," to which in turn would be attached reading circles, farmers' circles, cultural centers and clubs, great care being taken that they should be led by individuals "loyal to the cause of socialism." With regard to the ticklish question of the correct method to use in the exercise of Communist leadership, Kadar made "no secret" of the fact that the party members had to discuss in advance of a meeting "a few fundamental things which are indispensable if a uniform stand is to be made." But as party resolutions were binding only on party members, non-party members "should be made to adopt them with the help of convincing arguments in the true sense of the words . . . " Kadar failed to define what a Marxist would consider to be the true sense of the words "convincing arguments."

126. It seems fair to assume from the above, together with the fact that the membership in the PPF National Council includes the heads of all the religious denominations,

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Archbishop Grösz among them, that those who participate in the movement do so partly under compulsion, partly with the idea that there being no hope of crushing the Soviet forces, they might as well do what they can to make their country as livable as possible. From the regime's point of view, the PPF helps to veil the embarrassing meagerness of the Communist Party ranks.

The January 1958 Cabinet Reshuffle

127. The need to devote all his time to the work of strengthening the Party may well have been the main reason for the government reshuffle effected on January 27, 1958, as Kadar indicated when he informed the National Assembly that he was relinquishing the premiership, although remaining formally a member of the government as Minister of State. The new premier was Ferenc Münnich, from November 4, 1956, to February 1957 Kadar's Minister of Defense and State Security, and later First Deputy Premier. He was succeeded in the latter capacity by Antal Apro. Kallai turned over the Ministry of Culture to Valeria Benke, but like Kadar remained in the cabinet as Minister of State. He also replaced Apro as president of the PPF.

128. Kadar assured the deputies that the main lines of government policy would not change, and there seems to be no sound reason to doubt his assertion, since Münnich's attitude, since October 1956 at any rate, had shown a striking parallelism to his own. The change certainly did not foreshadow a "softer" line, for Apro and Benke, who had been promoted, were notoriously tougher than the men they replaced, and Kadar in his speech to the National Assembly on January 27, 1958 stated bluntly that there would be no general amnesty for counter-revolutionaries. Criminals, he said, had to be punished and people who might be tempted to imitate them had to be deterred. Indeed, Münnich, addressing the national conference of judges on February 22, 1958, went even further. While the Minister of Justice,

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Dr. Nezval, had blamed some courts for excessive indulgence, he had also found that "sometimes they were unduly severe toward people who were misled and had played no leading part during the counter-revolution," but Munnich found fault only with "certain courts" which were now "judging the political crimes less severely, " and with others who "treat economic crimes with restraint, a grave danger in the present situation. " His appeal to judges always to remember that the period of class struggle was not over and that the socialist camp was fighting for peace under Soviet leadership, which alone could guarantee the fulfillment of "their patriotic task to defend the people's democracy, " was a flagrant revival of "the end justified the means" principle.

129. The economic program outlined by Kadar in his January 27, 1958, speech was realistic. No attempt would be made to improve the standard of living in 1958; all the government could aim at was to "consolidate" the December 1957 level. And even that demanded higher labor productivity and an effective curb on wholesale pilfering of public property. Moreover, a determined effort had to be made to improve the balance of trade in 1958 by reducing imports 15% and increasing exports 22%, chiefly through the development of industries which required comparatively less raw materials but more skilled labor. The two main problems to be solved, Kadar indicated, were the repayment of the foreign loans, chiefly from socialist countries, and finding the means for further investment, which, in 1957, had been "very low. " For, he said, "the main weakness in last year's economic work was that consumption increased by leaps and bounds while, in comparison, production lagged. "

130. With regard to the peasantry, Kadar claimed an increase in the membership of "producer cooperatives and cooperative groups" in 1957 from 119, 000 to 164, 000

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and asserted that the government would continue to be guided by the principle of making it possible for "the individual peasant to prosper and the cooperative peasant even more. This should bring the individual peasant nearer to the producer cooperatives' . . ." without need for coercion.

131. The "petty bourgeoisie," mainly composed of small artisans and shopkeepers, was assured by Kadar that, although "unhealthy trends" would continue to be severely curbed, "they would be in a position to carry out useful activities for the good of the people for a considerable time to come while socialist industry and commerce are being developed." This reprieve was justified by Kadar on the grounds that they played a useful role in satisfying the needs of the population, and that Lenin had approved the "winning over of the petty bourgeoisie" - which would be done according to "specific Hungarian conditions." What these conditions were, he did not explain, any more than how the petty bourgeoisie could be won over with the assurance of ultimate socialization of their activities staring them in the face.

132. Munnich, in his acceptance speech on the following day (January 28, 1958), simply affirmed that he agreed 100% with all Kadar had said, and that the purpose of the governmental changes had been to "permit greater differentiation in our work."

133. There seems to be no reason to seek any further motives for the reshuffle which merely reestablished the norm generally in force since 1953 in the Soviet orbit, according to which the posts of First Party secretary and Prime Minister should not be occupied by the same man. On the other hand, the illusion held in some quarters that Munnich was slated to inaugurate a new and more liberal

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era was quickly dispelled by his words - such as his address to the national conference of judges quoted above, and by his deeds, such as the restrictions on private industry and the new agricultural taxes introduced in February. These taxes substantially increased the load on the wealthier independent farmers - notwithstanding Kadar's recent assurances to Parliament that pressure would not be used to force peasants into collectives.

#### Causes and Aims of the Hungarian Revolution

134. Paradoxically, Communists and anti-Communists are in substantial agreement on the causes of the Hungarian Revolution - or counter-revolution, as the Communists insist on calling it, although it is hard to see what difference it makes. Most spokesmen for the two camps seem to disagree, however, with regard to the aims of the Revolution. In this case the paradox is even greater, for it is the Communist spokesmen who maintain that the aim of the rebels was, according to the Hungarian White Book, nothing less than "to overthrow the socialist popular regime and to spread the sphere of influence of Western capitalism over Hungary - in other words, bourgeois restoration."<sup>1</sup> Or, as Kadar told a workers' deputation on November 14, 1956: "We have no reason to doubt the statements made by honest middle class politicians that they want socialism; only, after an election defeat of Communists, these politicians would be set aside by their own parties . . . " Some anti-Communist, or at any rate non-Communist, spokesmen imply that the revolution was directed more against Communist abuses, than against Communism itself. The United States Information Agency asserts, for example, that "The Hungarians did not fight . . . completely to repudiate every-

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Volume II.

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thing which had been done under the Communist regime or completely to repudiate certain socialistic concepts or to create for themselves a system of government or way of life like that of the Americans."<sup>1</sup> The Special Committee of the UN describes the dispossession without compensation of "reactionary landowners" and of "industrialists" as "reforms," which, they were convinced, would not have been undone if the Revolution had been victorious.<sup>2</sup>

135. While one can fully agree with the Special Committee that the despoiled owners had no chance of getting their property back or even of obtaining compensation, it is questionable whether the procedure can properly be described as a reform. Moreover, as for the general underlying spirit of the Revolution, Sefton Delmer, an eye-witness of the October 23 demonstration, seems to have correctly diagnosed it when he reported to his paper: ". . . Gigantic portraits of Lenin are being carried at the head of the marchers . . . But the youths in the crowd, to my mind, were in the vast majority as anti-Communist as they were anti-Soviet . . . "<sup>3</sup>

136. No one can claim to know exactly what kind of social, economic and political institutions would have been adopted by the Hungarian people, if they had regained their full freedom, but it may be safely assumed that very few of the Communist "reforms" would have been maintained

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<sup>1</sup>A Study of Communications and Propaganda Effectiveness in the Light of the Hungarian Revolution of October-November, 1956. September, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Chapter III, Par. 23.

<sup>3</sup>Daily Express, (London) October 24, 1956.

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except, of course, for the spoliation of the propertied classes. However, that would have had little to do with ideology. Obviously, many things, once done, cannot be undone, regardless of their merits, and some improvements, such as development of public health services, are to be welcomed, whatever the regime under which they are carried out. On the other hand, statements of intent to retain certain typically Communist features made at a time when a settlement with the Russians seemed possible but still remained to be achieved, can hardly be taken at face value.

137. What the great majority of Hungarians undoubtedly wanted is reflected in rough outline in the results of the survey undertaken by International Research Associates.<sup>1</sup> 74% of the over one thousand Hungarian refugees interviewed replied to the question about the kind of government they had wanted to see established in Hungary: A government like Austria, the US, or Sweden. None had wanted a government like the USSR, only one had wanted one like Poland, and two like Yugoslavia. The Austrian, American, or Swedish type of government was no doubt the one the majority of Hungarians would have wanted if they had been completely free, but as absolute non-interference in Hungarian affairs on the part of the USSR was obviously out of the question, they would most likely have settled for a compromise, something similar to the Polish solution. It is possible that the Moscow leaders themselves were at that time sincere in their conciliatory October 30, 1956 statement, as well as in the Moscow Radio broadcast of the same day, which declared that "Current reports from all over Hungary indicate that the working people are backing the new Nagy government and approve its program . . . " Whether they

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<sup>1</sup> New York, February 1957.

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changed their minds or whether this was calculated deceit will probably never be known.

138. As for Nagy, he had never clearly renounced the basic Communist tenet of the dictatorship of the proletariat. His statement over Radio Kossuth on October 30, 1956 was ambiguous: "In the interest of further democratization of the Party's life, the Cabinet abolishes the one-party system and places the country's government on the basis of democratic cooperation between coalition parties as they existed in 1945," for Gomulka has proved that "democratic cooperation between coalition parties" and de facto Communist dictatorship are not irreconcilable, at any rate in the Communist mind. It is true that Hungarian Revolutionary Councils and the Workers' Councils were insisting on a genuine parliamentary democracy, but half a loaf is better than none and they might have settled for less if that was the price of national sovereignty à la Polonaise.

139. But there was one essential difference between the Polish and Hungarian situations: In Poland, at the crucial moment, Premier Cyrankiewicz, First Party Secretary Ochab, and Security Police Chief Komar had sided with Gomulka, and there had been no fighting between Russians and Poles. In Hungary their opposite numbers, Gerö and Hegedus, had opposed Nagy, the Security Police had touched off the armed uprising by firing on the student demonstration, and to save their skins, they had, if not appealed to the Russians for help, at any rate publicly welcomed it. The bitter fighting had inevitably exacerbated the latent Hungarian Russo-phobia, and besides, the Hungarians, unlike the Poles, had no reason to need the protection of the USSR against a powerful and unreconciled neighbor. Instead of Hungary owing any territorial gains to Russia, it was Moscow which had in 1945 forced Hungary to return Northern Transylvania, acquired in 1945 under Hitler's Vienna Award, to Rumania.

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140. Conversely, in the absence of any overriding raison d'état to keep Hungary in the fold, Moscow either had never felt that Nagy could be trusted, or else, had changed its mind when on October 31, 1956 he demanded negotiations on the subject of withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact - and the onslaught on the Suez Canal had begun. Whether Nagy distrusted the Russians as much as they did the Hungarians and thought that it was now or never if Hungary was to get rid of the Soviet forces and to achieve the neutrality he had advocated in his book, or whether he felt that he would be unable to win the allegiance of the people and to establish his authority if he did not take a strong stand from the start, or both, is impossible to tell. It does not make much difference. He seems to have been following public opinion rather than to have been leading it.

141. As stated above, Communists of various shades and non-Communists agree on the basic cause of the Hungarian disaffection which erupted on October 23, 1956; viz. resentment of conditions under Communism as applied by Rakosi and Gerő under Russian domination. Communists currently disagree, however, as to whether the errors of the Rakosi era were serious enough to explain a general uprising against the regime, as the "revisionists" maintain, or, as the Stalinists and Kadar "moderates" claim, were merely bad enough to justify widespread discontent and a demand for reform, a situation of which the "Horthyists" took advantage to stage a counter-revolution, in which they were joined by a small number of misled students and workers. At the outset, indeed, there was no disagreement. All Hungarian Communists who expressed their views after October 23, with the exception of extreme Stalinists like Revai, are on record as having agreed at one time or another that the movement was a national revolt against Soviet occupation and the Party's crimes and errors, a testimony which cannot be erased by later opportunistic reinterpretations.

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142. This diagnosis was confirmed, although not quite as bluntly, by Moscow itself. The self-criticism, both explicit and implicit, contained in the Soviet statement of October 30, 1956 was damning enough - and all the more remarkable for the sharp contrast with the aggressive tone of the Pravda editorial at the height of the Polish crisis, less than two weeks earlier.

143. The October 30 Declaration conceded that in the process of "deep revolutionary transformation" of East Europe, "there were not a few difficulties, unsolved problems, and downright mistakes . . . violations and mistakes which infringed the principle of equality in relations between the USSR and other Socialist countries." The Soviet government declared itself ready to discuss measures "to remove any possibilities of violating the principle of national sovereignty and mutual advantage and equality in economic relations." The Soviet government also considered it urgent to examine "whether a further stay of USSR advisors" in the People's Democracies was expedient, and was ready to examine the question of Soviet troops stationed in the Warsaw Treaty countries.

144. With regard to events in Hungary, the Soviet government stated that the working people of that country were "rightly raising the question of the necessity of eliminating serious shortcomings in the field of economic building, of the further raising of the material well-being of the population and of the struggle against bureaucratic distortions . . . However, this just and progressive movement of the working people was soon joined by forces of the black reaction and counter-revolution, which are trying to take advantage of the discontent on the part of the working people to undermine the people's democratic order and to restore the old landlords' and capitalists' order."

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<sup>1</sup>October 19, 1956.

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145. The Soviet leaders regretted that developments had led to bloodshed and explained that the Soviet troops had entered Budapest at the request of the Hungarian People's Government to establish order; and, since the further presence of Soviet units in the city would "serve as a cause of even greater deterioration of the situation," they announced that they had ordered the withdrawal of these units as soon as this was "recognized by the Hungarian Government to be necessary. "

146. The next day, November 1, Kadar, in his 9:00 PM broadcast announcing the formation of the MSZMP, the new Hungarian Communist Party, expressed a somewhat divergent opinion. Our people, he said, had in a glorious uprising, shaken off the Rakosi regime, which had violated Hungarian decency and pride, disregarded Hungary's sovereignty and freedom, and light-heartedly wasted its natural wealth. "We can safely say," he continued, "that the ideological and organizational leaders who prepared this uprising were recruited from our people's ranks. Communist writers, journalists, university students, the youth of the Petöfi Club, thousands and thousands of workers and peasants and veterans who were imprisoned on false charges fought in the front lines against Rakosi's despotism and political hooliganism. "

147. At that time, for Kadar, the counter-revolution and intervention from abroad were only a "threatening danger," which had to be overcome with the help of the other parties. "Our people," he concluded, "have proven with blood their intention to support unflinchingly the Nagy government's efforts aimed at the complete withdrawal of Soviet forces. "

148. By November 5, Kadar had reached the conclusion that "Imre Nagy's government tried to eliminate the

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counter-revolution peacefully, by political maneuvers . . . But the policy of procrastination only helped the counter-revolutionaries. "<sup>1</sup> On November 14, Kadar declared he was willing to reach a political agreement with Nagy, and Shepilov considered that Nagy had only proved incapable of coping with "the reactionary upsurge. " But on January 6, 1957, a Hungarian government statement flatly accused Nagy of treachery.

Mistakes of the Rakosi Regime According to Pravda

149. A detailed bill of particulars listing the "gross mistakes committed by Rakosi and Gerö", both in general political questions and in the field of economic policy and cultural development" which caused the "justified dissatisfaction" of a "section of the workers, " and which was then "exploited by counter-revolutionary forces, " was supplied by Pravda on November 23, 1956. It included the following:

Ignorance of the mood of the working class, the peasants, and the intelligentsia;

Mechanical copying of the USSR in the matter of rapid industrialization in spite of the very different conditions and an inadequate supply of raw materials, in disregard of "repeatedly given comradely advice not to do this"; and neglect of agriculture and consumer goods to the detriment of the standard of living;

Indiscriminate acceptance within the party ranks of all those who wished to join to exploit the party for their own ends, with the result that

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<sup>1</sup> Nepszabadsag, November 6, 1956.

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the Hungarian Workers' [Communist] Party had, in a country of 9 million inhabitants, a membership of 900,000, including a "flood of small bourgeois nationalist elements and careerists";

Inadequate education of the Party cadres and poor Party organization;

Insufficient respect for national peculiarities, and toleration of practices "which hurt the national self-respect of the Hungarian people," such as, for instance, "the introduction of a military uniform resembling the Soviet uniform," and other unnecessary and "repugnant" imitations of Soviet patterns;

Inability and unwillingness to head the movement for reform after the 20th Congress; on the contrary, asserting, "in opposition to the views expressed by the majority of party members," that "the policy pursued by the leadership . . . was on the whole correct and needed no change."

Doing nothing to settle definitely and in a short time past mistakes, and lacking a clear, political line;

Inability to "find support in the party organization, in which at that time healthy and internationalist ideas still prevailed," to rebuff "in the anti-leadership propaganda nationalistic, chauvinistic and other slogans, including appeals for a return to bourgeois democracy and anti-socialist expressions which frequently opposed the Yugoslav road to socialism to the experiences of the whole socialist camp . . .";

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Failure to recognize both "the justified dissatisfaction among the masses as well as the ever spreading undermining and plotting of counter-revolutionary elements . . . Dissatisfaction became increasingly bitter until finally it led to street demonstrations in Budapest on October 23. A section of the workers joined in the demonstrations with the good intention of expressing their justified dissatisfaction caused by the mistakes of the former leadership. But this elemental dissatisfaction was exploited by counter-revolutionary forces."

150. Unfortunately, Pravda fails to explain why, if Rakosi was indeed guilty of so many gross errors and of such disregard of Soviet advice, the Kremlin had backed him as against Nagy in March 1955, or why in July 1956, Gerb was its choice to succeed Rakosi, although Gerb was notoriously Rakosi's alter ego.

151. The striking fact about the Soviet indictment is that Rakosi and Gerb are nowhere accused of excessive harshness and brutality, still less of crimes, as Stalin had been by Khrushchev. Just the opposite. They were criticized for "not giving any rebuff to anti-Party and anti-government propaganda" and for lack of vigilance when they failed to notice "both the growth of justified dissatisfaction of people as well as the growing conspiratorial activity of counter-revolutionary elements."

Rakosi's Crimes According to Kadar

152. The Hungarian Communists were not so reticent at first. Kadar, for instance, in his broadcast announcing the formation of the MSZMP (November 1, 1957) had spoken of the "criminal deeds" and "despotism" of

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Rakosi; and Marosan, certainly not a moderate, spoke of the "errors and crimes" of Rakosi and his associates.<sup>1</sup> But in his Moscow speech on March 27, 1957, Kadar sang a different tune: Rakosi's mistakes, although "not inconsiderable, " had been "of secondary importance, " and "more effective suppression of the enemy (the bourgeoisie) would have been justified . . . " Bulganin, too, in his reply, scored the Rakosi-Gerő leadership for its "failure to wage a determined struggle against the counter-revolutionary elements and against the preparation of the anti-popular movement" coupled with "gross violations of socialist law." Its greatest mistake had been its divorce from the Party masses and the people. Marosan, speaking of the July wave of arrests, told a workers' meeting: "Our organs of internal security today are delivering a blow against those against whom Rakosi should have delivered a blow!"<sup>2</sup>

153. It follows from these and many other statements, that the Soviet and Hungarian orthodox Communist spokesmen began by differing somewhat as to the causes and the nature of the Hungarian uprising. The Soviet leaders openly admitted in their October 30, 1956 statement and the November 23, 1956 Pravda article that the legitimate dissatisfaction of which the counter-revolutionaries took advantage had been caused by serious shortcomings in the economic field and the consequent low standard of living, the wounding of Hungarian pride and national feelings, and the failure to eradicate the "cult of personality" after the 20th Congress. They admitted, by implication, violation on their part of "the principle of national sovereignty and of mutual advantage and equality in economic relations, " by stationing Soviet advisors and troops in Hungary and exploiting the country. Rakosi's and Gerő's "mistakes" were enumerated at length, but they were not accused of

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<sup>1</sup> Radio Budapest, January 27, 1957

<sup>2</sup> Radio Budapest, July 31, 1957

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crimes, only of weakness in repressing counter-revolutionary activities. It was obviously too embarrassing for the Kremlin collective leadership to admit that they had continued to countenance crimes for three years after Stalin's death. Moreover, as Talleyrand has said, in politics, blunders can be worse than crimes.

154. Kadar, on the other hand, expressly and repeatedly accused the Rakosi regime of crimes as well as of mistakes, and as late as November 11, maintained that the uprising had been a popular movement in which, however, "there were also counter-revolutionary demands." His statement in Nepszabadsag of November 6, 1956, that the government agreed with the demand that the Soviet troops should withdraw as soon as calm and order were restored, was an oblique confirmation of the resentment caused by their presence.

155. But since Kadar's visit to Moscow in March 1957, the Hungarian and Soviet theses on the causes of the Revolution had practically coincided. Neither Soviet troops and advisors, nor Rakosi's crimes, nor the "popular movement," were mentioned any more. The October events were described as a counter-revolution staged by foreign and native reactionaries and made possible by Rakosi's mistakes, chiefly his failure to gauge popular sentiment accurately and his weakness toward hostile elements.

156. Surprisingly, in the latest "official" pronouncement on the subject, an article by Geza Kassai in the January 1958 issue of the Party organ Tarsadalmi Szemle, the charge that the counter-revolution was the work of Hungarian counter-revolutionaries - i.e. anti-Communists, "Horthyists," and foreign reactionaries, is dropped. The blame is laid on "the rightist Imre Nagy-Lozonczy faction" which was "fully revealed as a revisionist group which

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denied all basic principles of Marxism" - i.e. on authentic, albeit traitorous, Party members. "The revisionists," the article continues, "requested the aid of the imperialists against socialism. Within a week, the Imre Nagy government fulfilled the demands of imperialism and of the Hungarian counter-revolution," the former consisting in the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops, abrogation of the Warsaw Pact, and neutrality, the latter in the program of Ioszeif Dudas. As, further on, the article accuses the revisionists of having "incited" the counter-revolution, of having attempted to "sever the intelligentsia from the working class," and of having "also stirred up the avantgardist endeavors of the misguided section of youth," the Hungarian Party mouthpiece practically puts the entire responsibility for the counter-revolution on Communists, however misguided.<sup>1</sup> It would follow that the Soviet forces intervened in a purely internal conflict between two factions of the Hungarian Communist Party.

157. For the time being, at any rate, Communists and anti-Communists agree, therefore, that the revolutionaries were Hungarians, and not fascist Hungarians at that. As for the basic causes of the Revolution, the Soviet and Hungarian leaders are on record as having admitted at one time or another that they were above all patriotism,<sup>2</sup> i.e.

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<sup>1</sup>One may hope that this more truthful presentation of the facts is somehow connected with the warning, given in the same article, against persistence in the "dogmatic" error of selecting "facts in accordance with our subjective necessity," and thus "falsifying, distorting, and embellishing, and failing to reveal causes, connections, and consequences."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Marosan: "Nationalism caused most of the confusion in people's minds last October." (Radio Budapest, November 1956)

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resentment of Russian domination, coupled with the demand for political freedom, for an end to police terrorism, and for better living conditions.

158. On this question, too, Communists and anti-Communists are substantially in agreement. The survey conducted by International Research Associates among the Hungarian refugees corroborates the impressions of numerous observers and newspapermen who witnessed the uprising. "In general," the authors of the survey wrote, "one can hardly escape the impression that economic and political factors were equally important in creating a climate of almost universal discontent . . . The unfavorable economic conditions were perhaps hardest to live with day by day, and the political atmosphere was perhaps a more effective spur to revolt. But on the whole, it is not practicable to attempt to separate the causes for discontent before the uprising from the reasons for the uprising or to seek to determine which one reason caused which phenomenon."

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ber 19, 1957). "Contemporary revisionists usually cover their betrayal . . . by saying . . . that they take 'national peculiarities into account.'" (Tarsadalmi Szemle, January 1958). "The political debates which took place recently at almost every university in the country here demonstrated that nationalism is one of the most dangerous false ideologies in regard to its impact on university and college youth . . . The spread of bourgeois nationalism made every basically essential problem appear to be of minor importance in the eyes of those students who came under the influence of nationalism . . . These students also seized upon the false slogan of pure democracy. Class interests faded from the horizon. What causes all this? To a large extent, nationalism." (Nepszabadsag, January 21, 1958).

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159. More specifically, the question as to the two most important causes of the uprising elicited the following replies:

	Very Important	Somewhat Important
Russian domination	94%	3%
Secret Police (AVH) activities	92	4
Low wages-high prices	86	11
Lack of free speech	84	14 <u>1</u>

Among the answers to the question as to the two most important reasons why the people in Hungary had been willing to attempt an uprising, the "Example of Poland" led the others, "Rehabilitation of Rajk" and "Denunciation of Stalin," by a wide margin.

160. The latter question appears, however, to have been poorly worded. The replies make much better sense if the question is interpreted as referring to events which inspired the peaceful demonstration of October 23, and not to the violent phase. Peter Fryer is certainly right when he explains that what transformed the demonstration into an uprising was Gerö's broadcast and the shooting of the demonstrators by the AVH: "Two things had happened . . . [Gerö] . . . had made it clear to the most obtuse among his hearers that nothing was going to change . . . Secondly . . . the crowds which had gathered outside the Radio Station . . . were fired on by AVH men . . . This was, without question, the spark that turned the peaceful demonstration into a revolution."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The report explains that "Percentages, based on number of cases, add to more than 100 since some respondents gave more than one answer."

<sup>2</sup> Fryer, op.cit. p. 44.

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161. The question may, however, be raised whether after the spontaneous reaction of the enraged crowd to the AVH salvos, the people of Budapest would have dared oppose armed resistance to the Russian forces the next day had it not been for the aid which practically all Hungarians expected from the West and the UN. There were 96% affirmative answers to this question by IRA interviewers, and 77% specified that it was military aid they expected.

162. As for the social classes and groups which supplied the fighters "who fought in the front line in the uprising of the people against Rakosi despotism and political hooliganism," Kadar, on November 1, 1956, listed the "Hungarian Communist writers, journalists, university students, the youth of the Petöfi circle, thousands and thousands of workers and peasants, and veteran fighters who had been imprisoned on false charges" from among whom came the "ideological and organizational leaders who prepared this uprising."

163. In his November 4, 1956, proclamation, announcing that he had assumed the premiership, Kadar even listed the workers first among those who had been "rightly dissatisfied" with the grave mistakes of the Rakosi and Gerö clique, and conceded that "many honest workers, in particular the major part of the youth" had "joined the movement." By October 1957, although the Party line had changed, it was still conceded that "in the first days of the counter-revolution, in addition to class enemies and hooligans, a considerable number of young intellectuals and students and a smaller number of young workers became actively involved in supporting the counter-revolution."<sup>1</sup> A few days later Marosan hastened to explain that it was true that all

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution adopted by KISZ Conference, October 13, 1957.

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students took part in the October 23 demonstration, but that it was also true that "24 hours later the majority kept away from further events, in the same way as the workers."<sup>1</sup>

164. But these successive rectifications can only underscore the embarrassing fact that on the admission of the Party chief himself, the workers, too, in whose name the regime claims to govern, had risen against it. On this point also, the findings of the IRA survey coincide with Kadar's admission: the overwhelming majority of refugees polled assigned the leading role in the revolution to students and workers, while writers were credited with the greatest influence in keeping anti-Soviet opposition alive.

The Kadar Record

165. From the Communist point of view, the Kadar regime's record is certainly considered very good. Economically, the country has recovered more rapidly than was expected, and politically, it is quiet, although, as a deputy put it in the National Assembly on January 28, 1958, "we must very realistically point out that we are only at the beginning of creating an active and healthy political atmosphere."<sup>2</sup>

166. Actually the regime has achieved the bare minimum of the results attainable with the means at its disposal: overwhelming physical power (in the form of Russian troops), the needed raw materials and cash (obtained on credit), and control of all employment openings except in agriculture. And even with these, and in spite of higher wages, labor productivity has not reached the pre-revolution level - an obvious proof of worker disaffection. Kadar could have claimed a real success if he had actually carried out the program which he announced on November 4, 1957 and had won popular acquiescence in the government as well

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<sup>1</sup> Radio Budapest, October 16, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Ivan Darabos, Radio Budapest, January 29, 1958.

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as achieving economic recovery. But he has not obtained "the withdrawal of Soviet troops after the restoration of peace and order," and thus secured Hungarian independence and sovereignty, has not eliminated bureaucracy, has not introduced workers' management of enterprises, has not guaranteed "democratic elections in existing administrative bodies and Revolutionary Councils," and has not kept his promise "not to tolerate the persecution of workers under any pretext whatsoever for having taken part in the most recent events." The only promises he did keep, making a virtue out of necessity, were to modify the Five-Year Plan, "taking into consideration the capacity of the country," to abolish compulsory deliveries of farm produce and to assist individual farmers, and to support retail trade and artisans. It may not be a coincidence that the capitalist sectors, agriculture and crafts, are today the flourishing branches of the Hungarian economy.

167. The question naturally arises, why did Kadar not keep his promises? There are two possible answers: the first is simply that he never intended to - a not unlikely assumption in the case of a Communist for whom the end justifies the means and who had double-crossed the man to whom he owed his freedom and who headed the Cabinet of which he was a member; the other answer might be that Kadar's program failed to include the two basic demands of the people, the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet forces and free elections; in other words, national independence and internal freedom. That made Kadar unacceptable to the majority of Hungarians from the start and left him no other course but the use of force and repression.

168. Voices have been raised even among Hungarian Communists demanding an end to rule by terror. Istvan Dobi declared on August 20, 1957 that he agreed with those who urged that the counter-revolutionary cases should be

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closed as soon as possible. The guilty had to be punished, but "from now on supreme attention must be turned toward the problem of how to build tomorrow and the day after tomorrow." Nepszabadsag, on August 23, 1957, pleaded for an end of the uncertainty in which tens of thousands of people found themselves, not knowing ten months after the uprising whether they were safe or not. Magyar Nemzet of September 19 recalled that article and warned that the present policy might turn those "who do not wish to be enemies into enemies." Gyula Ortutay, the newly appointed Rector of the Lorand Eotvos University of Science, called for "peace, study, and appeasement instead of sentences."

169. But Kadar, in a speech in Peiping, declared that "there should be no compromise in dealing with counter-revolutionaries; instead there should be fighting as one would fight a tiger."<sup>1</sup> Marosan, Apro, and Kallay warned potential demonstrators on the October 23 anniversary that the regime would deal with them mercilessly. The abolition on November 3, 1957, of the summary courts, but not of the summary procedure which could always be requested by the public prosecutor, therefore meant only that the judiciary had liquidated its backlog of cases. Unpublicized arrests, particularly of university and literary figures, and executions for revolutionary activities have continued steadily, and the pronouncements of the new premier foreshadow anything but a milder course.

170. The obvious conclusion is that although there are those among the Hungarian Communist leaders who question the wisdom of continued government by terror, the men in control do not plan any change, for the time being at any rate. Yet, surprisingly, some Hungarian

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<sup>1</sup> The New York Times, October 4, 1957.

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non-Communists or moderate Communists still consider Kadar a moderating influence, on the theory that if it were not for him, Rakosists like Revai, Apro, Marosan, or Kiss would have a free rein. It is of course possible that if any of these men were in Kadar's place, the number of victims might be even greater, the collectivization drive might be resumed and the truce with the Churches ended. The difference could, however, not be very great for "moderation" à la Kadar must be the line approved by Moscow and as such binding on any eventual successor.

#### The Kadar Regime in a Vicious Circle

171. The chief result of the abortive revolution has been, for the Hungarians, tighter Russian control than before. Moscow cannot but consider it to have been a mistake to allow Rakosi the comparative freedom he enjoyed. Although Nagy's book reveals an amount of Soviet "advice" on purely Hungarian matters still inconsistent with the alleged sovereign and independent status of the people's democracies, the Pravda editorial of November 23, 1956, seems to indicate that Rakosi got away with considerably greater freedom of action than was generally believed possible. In this case Moscow was probably telling the truth for some at least of the instances of disregard for Soviet advice, - especially with regard to industrialization and rehabilitation of victims of Stalinism, - are corroborated by Nagy in his book. Considering the unfortunate results of their forbearance, it would be only natural for the Soviet leaders to have decided not to repeat their mistake.

172. Moreover, when they decided to crush the Hungarian uprising by military force, the Soviet leaders took a road of no return. Tito was probably right when he said in his speech in Pula on November 9, 1956, that the first

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intervention at the request of Gerö<sup>1</sup> was "absolutely wrong" and that if the Kadar government had been formed and issued its program before the second Soviet military intervention instead of after, "it would have been easier to find a way out of this critical situation." Tito further stated that he had told the "Soviet comrades" that the mistake could be only made good provided "the Soviet troops withdrew the moment the situation in that country is settled and quiet . . . The Soviet comrades stated that their troops would then leave."

173. Tito's theory has, it is true, been challenged, notably by Pal Hajdu writing in Nepszabadsag of July 25, 1957, who claimed that only the Soviet intervention "made it possible for the socialist forces to rally effectively." Without it, "they would have disintegrated from within and been disorganized by acts of betrayal . . ." But it may be argued that without the Soviet intervention Nagy might have had a chance of establishing a Gomulka type regime accepted as a pis aller by the Hungarian people, whereas the man elevated to power at the point of Russian bayonets would fall as soon as they were withdrawn. Even today, the regime lacks the minimum forces to impose its will without foreign help. The Hungarian Army is poorly armed and trained, and considered unreliable politically. Since the civil police also is not considered trustworthy, the only force on which the government can rely is the Secret Police, some 25,000 men strong, who reappeared once more in their old uniform in October 1957. This seems to be the only explanation why, the assurance to Tito, and possibly also to Kadar, notwithstanding, the Soviet divisions are still in

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<sup>1</sup> However, Marosan, addressing the Csepel workers on July 25, 1957, claimed that he was the one who "on the night of October 23-24 demanded that Soviet troops should be thrown in," and the claim has never been denied. (Radio Budapest, July 25, 1957).

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Hungary. For logically it would seem that the USSR would gain more than it would lose if the Kadar regime were not so obviously a Russian puppet. After all, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Albania remain under Communist rule without Russian garrisons. The difference seems to be that as a result of the Soviet action in November 1956, not even the fiction that the Communist governments are local products for the establishment of which the presence or proximity of the Soviet armies had merely provided "favorable conditions," can be sustained in Hungary. It is true that in order to provide a semblance of legality to the second Soviet attack in the early hours of November 4, the Kadar regime shifted its ground and claimed that it was actually constituted the day before, on November 3, 1956, but the onus of having invited Russian armed intervention can hardly improve its position in Hungarian eyes. There is no way out of the dilemma.

174. Harrison Salisbury, in a Budapest despatch to The New York Times,<sup>1</sup> has recorded an allegedly Yugoslav view that if only the "moderate Kadar wing could strengthen itself with the Hungarian people," with Western support it could better resist the Stalinists and afford to be more liberal, and also be able to adopt a policy of greater independence from Moscow. But the "Yugoslavs" seem to overlook that the Hungarians are very unlikely to take their cue from Washington or Paris in such matters and that to win a minimum of popular acceptance, Kadar would first have to make amends by assuming a very firm attitude toward the Russians. If his metamorphosis did not have the desired effect, which is unlikely since few people would believe him sincere, he would fall between two stools; and even if it did, nothing proves that the support of the Hungarian people would

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<sup>1</sup>October 5, 1957.

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save him any more than it saved Nagy. In short, the Kadar regime is hated because it is a Soviet tool, and it is a Soviet tool because it is hated.

175. On the other hand, while it seems very doubtful that foreign recognition or the degree of cordiality of Western relations with a satellite Communist regime would affect its acceptability to the people in any way, there might be something to be said in favor of "normalization" of diplomatic relations with the Kadar government, if only because its ostracization justifies the assumption a contrario that the other satellite regimes have a superior status in international law or in ethics, or that Rakosi's regime was somehow more legal or better than Kadar's.

#### Weakness of the Hungarian Communist Party

176. Other handicaps which the "Yugoslavs" seem to overlook are the facts that Kadar himself is neither a Gomulka nor a Tito, while the Hungarian Communist Party is weak, not only numerically, but what is more important, structurally. In February 1958, according to Laszlo Gyáros, President of the Information Office, membership stood at 400,000,<sup>1</sup> the figure reached in October 1957. Although in proportion to population, the Hungarian Party was one of the smallest in the satellites, it probably would be large enough to run the country if it were not split between "Kadar moderates," Stalinists, crypto-revisionists and pseudo-Communist opportunists. Indeed, any member of the old Party could join the new one upon request up to May 1, 1957,

<sup>1</sup>

Radio Budapest, February 14, 1958. The small membership of the youth organization KISZ - 170,000 according to the latest figure given by Radio Budapest on October 28, 1957 - is also highly symptomatic.

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and Karoly Kiss, Secretary of the Party Central Committee, is authority for the statement that "the majority of the adherents of the old Party were not Communists."<sup>1</sup> In a recent lecture he said that

"there was a large number of comrades - above all, intellectuals - who before, during, and after the counter-revolution, were affected by ideological disorders and consequently became the mouthpiece of certain revisionist views. Later, between December 1956 and February 1957, they asked for admission to the Party of which today they are members. Thus there are comrades who have not yet completely been freed from their revisionist deviations. They more or less escape to a certain state of passivity and place themselves in a position of wait and see. Others go as far as to sympathize with the revisionists excluded from the Party . . . There are several Party organizations - primarily in the circles of intellectuals, functionaries, and employees - where democratic bourgeois illusions still prevail . . . Let us add that the idea of national communism is still widespread among broad sections of the intellectuals

"Although revisionism is the main danger, not a small part of our militant members are still tainted with sectarian and dogmatic conceptions . . . [and] try to justify with the counter-revolution the so-called correctness of the methods of direction which were practiced by the Rakosi group."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Radio Budapest, May 7, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Published in part in Nepszabadsag of February 9, 1958.

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177. Under such circumstances, the usual Communist solution would be a purge of the undesirable elements. But, unlike Gomulka, Kadar cannot indulge in the luxury of reducing the number of Party members, nor could he hope to find desirable replacements for those excluded, which undoubtedly explains the statement made by Gyaros that no new members were being recruited.<sup>1</sup> The grapes are too sour. But obviously, something must be done to strengthen the Party, and it is therefore entirely believable that Kadar needs time to try to devise a remedy.

178. The fundamental causes of the Party's weakness are undoubtedly the still vivid memories of the recent fighting and the blatancy of the Russian yoke on Hungary, which reduce to a bare minimum the number of individual opportunists daring to incur public opprobrium by joining it while Soviet Communism is opposed by all classes of the population.

179. The workers' attitude was revealed by Kiss, when he admitted that "the relatively slow development of the Party organization in Budapest is a grave matter, Budapest being the most important industrial center and having always been the bastion of the Communist movement."<sup>2</sup> A member of the Central Committee told a correspondent of Swiat i Polska that "until not so long ago, Party organizations were not allowed to come into being in the factories."<sup>3</sup> As for the intelligentsia, he thought that "feelings of frustration and loss of faith in socialism are strongest here."

180. The peasants were described by Deputy Darabos in the National Assembly as "calm and satisfied," but this

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<sup>1</sup> Radio Budapest, February 14, 1958.

<sup>2</sup> Radio Budapest, May 7, 1957.

<sup>3</sup> Issue No. 1, January 1958.

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contentment, he admitted, had not yet exercised a sufficiently positive movement toward the producer cooperatives.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the peasants were satisfied, not with Communism, but with the fact that the regime had been leaving them alone. As for the bourgeoisie, Nepszabadsag<sup>2</sup> conceded that "we have still not succeeded in definitely winning over the urban small bourgeoisie," and Tarsadalmi Szemle<sup>3</sup> that "some sort of serious vacillations [sic] are noticeable in the country . . . mainly among the middle class."

181. That both the small bourgeoisie and small peasantry oppose Communism was again confirmed by Nepszabadsag<sup>4</sup> when it wrote that the internal source of the new type of revisionism, chiefly represented by Nagy and his associates and meaning a compromise with the capitalist system, the abandonment of the overthrowing of bourgeois power, the proletarian dictatorship, and socialism, was "the conservative mood of, and the pressure exercised by, the petty bourgeoisie and small peasantry which are still unwilling to accept socialism, as well as the impact of the propaganda of internal reactionary forces."

182. It is hard to reconcile these admissions by Party organs that the bulk of the Hungarian peasants, workers, and bourgeoisie are opposed to Communism - at any rate in its orthodox, "unrevised" form - with Kadar's unqualified assertion, in his January 27, 1958, speech to the National assembly, that the "Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government is supported by the overwhelming majority of the Hungarian working people."

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<sup>1</sup>Radio Budapest, January 29, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>February 19, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>Issue of January 1958.

<sup>4</sup>January 14, 1958.

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The Psychological Aftermath of the Communist Victory

183. Probably the most serious effect of the suppression of the October Revolution on the Hungarian People has been the general spread of cynicism, "the philosophy of disappointment and disillusionment," as Nepakarat<sup>1</sup> described, in a rare mood of sincerity, the psychological atmosphere in a nation only recently saved from the danger of being robbed of the benefits of Communism. The paper places the customary blame for this climate on bourgeois ideology, but goes on to admit that the sources of this cynicism are in elderly people, "the misfortune of earlier life" and in young people "an illusion of inner freedom and freedom of action . . . They can be dragged easily into political adventures as well as into crimes." The prevailing view is said to be "there will be a war anyway, so the best thing is not to bother about anything, only live for the present." Cynicism, the paper concedes, was caused also by Party errors: "On the basis of its mistakes, our rose-colored catch phrase propaganda originated a policy which, unfortunately, could not create the unity of words and deeds." The natural corollary of this philosophy is a widespread blunting of "the people's moral sense . . . an increased wave of thievery, speculation, and corruption,"<sup>2</sup> since there are no prospects of achieving a better life by honest means.

184. Presumably mindful of the danger of "rose-colored catch phrase propaganda," the regime does not even make the usual promises of a rapid improvement in the standard of living. Kadar told the Congress of Iron and Metal Workers' Unions in December 1957, and has repeated since then, that the problem was not to raise the standard of living, but, for some time ahead, to maintain the present level.

<sup>1</sup> November 16, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Nepszabadsag, November 15, 1957.

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#### The Bleak Outlook for the Regime

185. Although therefore the Hungarian people have been successfully cowed into submission, the Communist leadership finds itself in an impasse. It is in the situation of any Quisling government, unable to assert its authority otherwise than by force, yet having to rely on a foreign power to supply that force and thereby compounding its unpopularity and its need to resort to repressive measures. Loosening the reins would not help much, for what the Hungarians resent most is Russian domination and the government would still remain a Quisling regime in Hungarian eyes. The most likely result would be a period of growing anarchy, which the Russians would, however, not tolerate very long.

186. Theoretically the situation in Hungary could be somewhat improved by a compromise based on the toleration by Moscow of a Gomulka type regime. The main obstacle to that solution is the lack of any Hungarian Communist fulfilling the requirements of the part, with the exception of Nagy. But although there are the Tito and Gomulka precedents for the rehabilitation of sinners, Khrushchev would hardly have gone out of his way to brand Nagy, once again, as a "downright betrayer" of socialism if he contemplated the possibility of a deal with him.<sup>1</sup>

#### Some Lessons of the Revolution

187. Superficially, the Hungarian Revolution might be considered an unmitigated tragedy, for many lives and much treasure were apparently sacrificed by the Hungarians

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<sup>1</sup>In his speech on the occasion of the October Revolution anniversary, November 6, 1957.

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in vain. But actually, those sacrifices were far from useless, for they have taught the world extremely valuable lessons.

188. The Hungarian Revolution has shown the groundlessness of the fear or belief - according to the point of view - widely held not only abroad but by the captive populations themselves, that Soviet-Communist domination had all but won at least passive acceptance by the adult population and ensured the successful indoctrination of the younger generation. Gradual Communization and Russification, failing early liberation by the West, were therefore not inevitable.

189. On the other hand, the Hungarian Revolution has proved that the captive nations cannot expect effective assistance from the free nations, even in the event of a temporarily victorious revolution, but also that Moscow's assurances of respect for the sovereignty of nations, of non-interference in their internal affairs, and of the validity of different roads to socialism, to whomsoever else they may apply, do not apply to countries once they have fallen under Communist control.

190. The second Russian intervention, in particular, after the Hungarians had reestablished their independence albeit only for a few days, has demonstrated most opportunely the true value of the "peaceful coexistence" and the "renunciation of force to spread socialism" slogans. Individuals in a subordinate government position like Kadar or Marosan can always be found to make the request for assistance needed to give a semblance of color to a claim of legitimate police action.

191. The Revolution has further shown that, since its achievement of nuclear parity, at any rate, the Kremlin

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will stop at nothing to maintain its domination over Eastern Europe. Any illusions that acceptance of its suggestion of withdrawal of foreign forces from Central Europe would preclude a repetition of the intervention in Hungary, have been dispelled by Bulganin's message to President Eisenhower (December 10, 1957), in which he warned that any attempt to change the present situation from without by force - obviously including uprisings which would always be said to have been led and helped by foreign counter-revolutionaries - would mean war. The USSR would be acting in line with the pledge given by Khrushchev in East Berlin on August 8, 1957, "to do, in case of emergency, its duty toward the GDR, and defend its democratic achievements, freedom, and independence."

192. In brief, although the Hungarian Revolution and its aftermath must have convinced the Russians that their terrestrial satellites, with one exception, far from developing into economic and political assets, are increasingly heavy liabilities,<sup>1</sup> there is no sign of a change in their policy, which has remained substantially the same as under Stalin's rule.

193. The captive nations alone are powerless, and no change in the present situation is to be anticipated for a long time, barring unforeseeable events, perhaps least of all in Hungary, where the Russians are not likely to take chances. Even economic deficiencies have lost their

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<sup>1</sup> The economic liability is represented not only by loans and credits, the repayment of which is dubious, but also by assistance in the form of deliveries of raw materials below world prices and of buying Hungarian products, particularly machinery, at higher than world prices, according to Professor Jozsef Bogнар (Radio Budapest, February 15, 1958).

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explosive potential since the USSR has reached the fortunate position of being able to support other countries instead of exploiting them.

194. The assumption of the premiership by Munnich portends no change in the Hungarian situation. His record is no whit better than Kadar's, and in any case, since Malenkov's dismissal in early 1955, the premier in a Communist country is entirely subordinate to the First Party Secretary. If the hunt for "counter-revolutionaries" ultimately ceases, it will merely prove that all those who did not manage to escape have been rounded up, not that the regime has become more liberal.

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